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25 February 1985

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ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

FRENCH PAPER PROVIDES INFORMATION ON ASALA LEADER HAGOPIAN

Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian 16 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] LE MATIN, one of the leading dailies in France, has published an article about [ASALA leader] Hagop Hagopian entitled "The Portrait of an Armenian Terrorist Leader." The article carries the following information:

"Name: Bedros Avanesian; alias known as Hagop Hagopian, Mihran Minasian, Al Mujahid. Age: approximately 38. Place of birth: Iraq. Ancestry: Half Arab half Armenian. Description: Short, chubby, dark."

Using some of the information carried in LE MATIN's article, HURRIYET says that ASALA's veil of secrecy has begun to fall. HURRIYET adds: "The entire world knows them now, and everyone is convinced that ASALA is an arm of international terrorism."

The paper also states that Hagop Hagopian founded ASALA in Beirut in 1975.

LE MATIN says that Hagopian took part in the 1972 Munich Olympic massacre in the course of which [11] Israeli athletes were killed. Noting that the ASALA leader stayed in Beirut until July 1982 and that later he moved to Greece, the paper says that Hagopian's current whereabouts are unknown and that, however, it is a well-established fact that the said Armenian terrorist organization is currently headquartered in Greece.

After the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, when [PLO leader] Yasir Arafat and PLO guerrillas were forced out of Lebanon, Hagop Hagopian and his followers found a new "guardian." The French paper says that, after Andreas Papadreu and his party, PASOK, were elected to power in 1981, ASALA militants were accorded very favorable treatment in Greece. In youth festivals organized by PASOK, special programs were allocated to ASALA and Armenian terrorists, who also enjoyed the support of Syrian, Libyan and French authorities.

LE MATIN says: "Only a small portion of ASALA's income is provided by Armenian sources. The chief source of funds for their arms purchases is narcotics grown in the Lebanon's Bekaa valley and smuggled to various corners of the world." The paper adds that Bulgaria also helps ASALA extensively in its arms procurement efforts. The paper contends that Hagopian keeps some of ASALA's revenues for himself and puts them in personal investments. The paper also notes that Hagopian is ailing with cancer and that he has contributed large sums of money to various activities particularly in Greece.

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

ASALA MEMBER CONVICTED BY GREEK COURT GOES ON HUNGER STRIKE

Istanbul MARMARA in Armenian 18 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] Athens--Vahan Hudaverdian, an Armenian terrorist and a member of ASALA [Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia] who was recently sentenced to 14 years in prison in connection with a bombing plot, has gone on a hunger strike and refuses to accept any food to protest the verdict against him by a Greek court.

As is known, Hudaverdian was involved in a bomb attack against the Athens office of Kuwait Airlines in 1982, and a few days ago he was sentenced to 14 years in prison for his act.

The "Armenian National Movement," which is an arm of the terrorist organization, ASALA, has begun work to appeal the verdict against Hudaverdian and is currently handing out brochures in Athens. One such brochure contends that Hudaverdian, 22, is innocent and that he is the victim of injustice which must be rectified. The brochure says that Hudaverdian is determined to continue his fast even if it costs him his life because he is innocent. In the brochure, members of the said organization warn that if their colleague dies the Greek government will be held responsible.

The bomb placed in front of the Kuwait Airlines office in Athens exploded prematurely wounding Hudaverdian severely and killing instantly his 24-year-old accomplice, Sako Vahrabedian.

During his trial, Hudaverdian contended that he is innocent. In this connection, it was reported that the two Armenians wanted to punish Kuwait for taking a pro-Turkish stance.

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CSO: 4605/87

ARMENIAN AFFAIRS

INTENSIFICATION OF ATHEISTIC TREND IN SOVIET ARMENIA CITED

Tehran ALIK in Armenian 22 Dec 84 p 3

[Text] As is known, on October 21 international news agencies reported that PRAVDA, the press organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union [CPSU], leveled an array of criticisms and accusations against Soviet Armenia's party leadership, intelligentsia, youth and general population on behalf of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The article below has been written in response to one item in the accusations brought by the central authorities.

The Central Committee of the CPSU is busy with work as it always is before every congress. It is preparing for its 27th Congress in early 1986 where the next five-year plan [FYP] will be discussed and party policy will be reviewed. In other words, the Central Committee is trying "to prepare a proper harmonious ground for the FYP and to tie it organically to well-established economic plans and projects" as General Secretary Konstantin Chernenko suggested at the full session of the Central Committee in April 1984.

It was in response to this suggestion that the Central Committee scrutinized the internal state of the Soviet Union and, in particular, the condition of Soviet Armenia during its latest session in October 1984 in connection with agriculture which remains the weakest component of the Soviet economy. In its evaluation of the condition of Soviet Armenia, which was published on the front page of PRAVDA on 21 October, the Central Committee complained, among other things, about "the severe inadequacy of the atheistic education of the youth." The verdict about the political and ideological state of Soviet Armenia rested on the unpersuasive premise that the atheistic education is "inadequate."

By using this verdict to criticize state institutions designated to mold the political and ideological thoughts of the youth, the CPSU Central Committee has demanded from the Communist Party of Soviet Armenia "to improve, to enrich and to modernize the contents of ideological education and to intensify the effectiveness of all propaganda work," as noted by a lead article entitled "Problems of Social Sciences" in the 25 May 1984 edition of SOVETAKAN HAYASTAN, the press organ of the Soviet Armenian Communist Party. In other words, what is desired is to broaden and to consolidate the hold of the CPSU on the Armenian people, who are already subjected to various forms of pressure and deprivation, in particular in the sphere of the political-ideological education of the youth, who are already deprived of freedom of thought and democratic institutions.

However, this demand by the CPSU reflects differences of interpretation and evaluation among Armenian communist circles. The said demand completely disregards Armenian Communist Party First Secretary K. S. Demirjian's statement following Andropov's anticorruption campaign to the effect that "the contents of the work carried out to tackle economic, historical, philosophical, material, spiritual and cultural problems are basically in compliance with the problems put before Soviet science by party congresses and the plenums of the CPSU Central Committee."

The CPSU Central Committee has furthermore assigned additional responsibilities to Soviet Armenia's communist leadership. By demanding an intensification of the atheistic education of the youth, it is in essence forcing Armenian authorities to obey the new instructions from above and to restrict even further the yearnings of the youth for freedom of thought.

The political and ideological education of Soviet Armenian youth already suffers from the absence of free thought. The Soviet Armenian youth not only is deprived of the right to learn about different viewpoints and theories but is also obliged to tolerate the "effectiveness of all Soviet propaganda work." In this irritating and oppressive environment, which also leads to alienation, the intensification of atheistic education is obviously aimed at making the youth accept the legitimacy of a petrified official ideology and crushing completely the youth's passive resistance. The purpose of this effort is to eliminate the healthy reaction of the youth which is seeking paths of free thought in the national and political spheres.

Therefore, today as in the past 60 years, Soviet communism is indoctrinating the new generations with all means of propaganda and instruction at the disposal of the state and the party and is trying to replace religion with its own ideology. However, if the Soviet youth in general and the Soviet Armenian youth in particular continue to have and to develop religious feelings, that means that Soviet ideology cannot replace religion and cannot neutralize the Armenian Church, which is closely linked with the history and the cultural and social life of the Armenian people.

Even so, the attachment of the Armenian people or the Armenian youth to their church must not necessarily be interpreted as piousness or spirituality, but as a natural feeling for their national identity or as loyalty to their historic heritage. As such, the importance and the meaning of the presence and the role of the Armenian Church will gain even more emphasis in the future in Soviet Armenia and particularly in Soviet Armenian "dioceses."

That is why the latest campaign of atheistic education takes a different meaning and carries added gravity in the life of the Armenian people and is automatically interpreted as a campaign waged indirectly against the Church of Armenia and directly against Soviet Armenia and as a sign of blind party fanaticism and intolerance.

Furthermore, the more atheistic education has been emphasized in the past the more undesirable have the results been as a result of natural resistance, and this proves once and for all the impotence of Soviet ideology against the ideological and moral teachings of religion.

Consequently, this campaign against freedom of thought does not promise any gains for anyone, not even Soviet communism. Such a campaign would on the contrary hurt everyone involved. In order to reaffirm its predominance, Soviet communism must have the courage to compete freely and by natural means not only against religion and the church but also against currents with different political dispositions. Otherwise, it will remain condemned to ask for subservience to the bear from its own people as well as its subject nations and to continually seek "proper harmonious grounds."

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CSO: 4605/76

EGYPT

PROBLEM OF ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION, BILLING REVIEWED

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 3 Jan 85 p 4

/Article by Muhammad al-Shamma'; 'The Minister of Electricity and Power Talks to AL-AKHBAR: Who Is Responsible for Energy Guidance and Who Should Get Subsidies?"/

/Text/ The government recently concluded that the future of energy in Egypt is fraught with dangers, due to the depletion of its oil resources and the possibility that oil may be imported at high prices, adding a new commodity to the list of import commodities subjected to inflation in an unanticipated manner. Therefore it was inevitable that Egypt should think about compensating for any shortage that might occur in its oil exports with the other energy sources at its disposal which are not currently being exploited in adequate volume, or through the creation of new sources. In addition, there now is no way to avoid working to remedy all excesses in energy use by setting out the first comprehensive, solid national program for guiding energy in which the government and the masses will take part.

Contrary to custom, I entered the office of Eng Mahir Abazah, the minister of electricity, to find all the lights there out, except for a fluorescent light on the minister's desk, in addition to the table lamp placed on the desk; they were the only sources of illumination.

I said, laughing, that guidance started at the minister's desk. He said, "You can see for yourself that I hope that all citizens, like me, will make proper use of electricity." Then he said:

"Oil consumption rose from /words missing/ and in 1970 to 1977 consumption came to 9 million tons, then leapt up to 17.5 million tons in 1983, that is, tripled in just 12 years. In the last 5 years, the rates of natural gas exploitation have escalated at an annual average of 43 percent, after which come distillates, at 16 percent, then bottled butane at 15 percent, gasoline at 13.7 percent, heavy fuel oil at 10.3 percent and lastly kerosene at 7.8%.

Hydroelectric Power

"Electric power consumption also rose from 423 million kilowatt hours in 1952 to 1,402,000 kilowatts in 1959; this was generated by thermal plants. In 1960 the Aswan electric plant was put into operation at a capacity of 345

megawatts; the first stage of operation of the High Dam electric plant was in 1967, with an installed capacity of 2,100 megawatts. This resulted in an increase in the ratio of hydroelectric power's contribution to the generation of electricity to its highest level, in 1974, when it accounted for 72 percent of total electric power generated, coming to 8,519,000,000 kilowatt hours. This ratio then dropped, reaching 38 percent of total electric power generated in 1983, or 25,879,000,000 kilowatt hours, because of reliance on oil and gas to generate electric power to cope with the increase in consumption during the past 5 years."

Oil Reserves

The minister went on, "The facts in reports by scientific experts and technicians state that:

"The average annual increase in oil consumption in the past 5 years came to about 12.5 percent and, if oil consumption continues at these rates, it is expected that the production of the oil needed to cope with this demand from now to 1990 will come to about 280 million tons. Since the reserves discovered come to about 360 million tons, only 80 million tons of this reserve will remain, after which Egypt will face an inevitable shortage, in the event new fields are not discovered. It is inconceivable that planning should allow for estimates of oil that has not yet been discovered.

The Problem and the Solution

"Up to the year 1978, Egypt relied on hydroelectric power to provide 65 percent of electric power; since existing hydroelectric power is being exploited in full, the annual increase in electric power is being met through oil and natural gas. While the average annual increase in electricity consumption in the past 10 years was 13.5 percent, the annual rate of increase in demand for oil and natural gas has come to about 276 percent. If the situation continues, the oil produced in 2000 will not be enough for electric power production needs and Egypt will become an oil exporter in less than 10 years. Therefore it is necessary to use nuclear power and coal and alternatives to oil, which is being depleted.

"The problem is that energy sources in Egypt are limited and that it will not be possible to provide Egyptians' necessary power requirements for development from these sources. Therefore it has become necessary to guide the consumption of energy.

"The goal is to preserve national oil resources by limiting the rates of increase of energy consumption, now that the rate of increase of consumption has come to 13 percent while the rates of development are 8 percent; from this we find clearly how the sources of energy in Egypt are being depleted without yielding any returns."

The Government's Role

I asked, "What, now that we have defined the problem and its dimensions? Where is the solution? What is the government's role and the magnitude of participation by the masses?"

/Answer/ The only solution is to guide energy consumption. This policy is founded on the following approaches:

Price policy.

Organizational policy.

Technological development.

Let us start with organizational policy. In studying the uses of electric power consumption in Egypt, we find that industry accounts for 60 percent, household and commercial uses 30 percent, and utilities and government bodies 10 percent. Industry is the main area in which to guide consumption, apart from the centralization of decisions and resources of execution which big production units possess. The organizational measures which must be adopted and which energy and industry experts have come up with can be summarized by the following:

In order to coordinate the activities of major users and other industrial activities so that major activities do not correspond with the evening peak of public activities, so that that will not affect the productive capacity of industrial units.

The reduction of the loss of energy used in electric systems in industry and in the public systems feeding them, the preparation of a study on power consumption in each industry attributed to production and a comparison of that with similar industries in the world and the adoption of the necessary measures to reach international rates.

Granting incentives to people working in industrial companies in the event the use of power is guided, realizing tangible savings and monitoring electric power consumption and the extent to which programs and procedures bearing on power consumption guidance have been carried out.

Technological Development

Benefiting from technological development, which one can summarize as the following:

Benefiting from solar energy in industrial heating activities which require temperatures lower than 200 degrees centigrade.

Cogenerating thermal and electric power by using the steam required for industrial activities in generating electricity.

Developing and controlling illumination in factories.

Using electric power to reclaim thermal power lost in exhaust through thermal pumps and thermal wheels.

Having local industry devote attention to producing electric appliances with lower consumption of electric power.

Guidance and Savings

I asked, "What savings will you realize in the event the measures recommended for guiding the consumption of the power consumed in the production unit of each industry are adopted?"

The minister said, "By reviewing the results which the countries that preceded us in this field have realized, it is possible gradually to set forth realistic goals on the amount of savings of electric power used in industry. In the first year, the savings will come to 5 percent, in the second year to 4 percent, and in the third year 3 percent. Considering that industry accounts for 65 percent of total electric power consumption, the savings it is hoped will be realized in the context of electric power consumption as a whole will be 3 percent in the first year, 2.4 percent in the second year and 1.8 percent in the third year."

We always hear the complaint that household consumption by citizens, shops and electric ornaments is increasing from the minister of electricity and power.

At this point, the minister's voice rose and he spoke emphatically, gesturing as he referred to the high rates of consumption in homes and shops. He then said, "Here in my office I use a fluorescent light on the desk and put out all the lights, as you can see. If I go to a meeting, we turn on the electricity only in the corner where we are sitting. What if every citizen did in his home as we are doing? We will certainly save much energy."

Eng Mahir Abazah, the minister of electricity and power, then presented me with statistics on consumption by various classes for household uses. From the first glance, these reaffirmed the excesses in the use of electric power. The proportion of people consuming 45 kilowatt hours per month comes to 2,082,000 families, representing 47 percent of the number of users; their share of consumption is 10.5 percent. People who consume from 46 to 100 kilowatt hours number 1,675,000 families, representing 28 percent of the number of users, and their share of consumption is 24 percent. The total of these two groups is about 4.5 million families, representing 75 percent of the number of users throughout the republic. This segment consumes about 34.5 percent of electric power. People who consume from 101 to 150 kilowatt hours number 715,000 users, or a share of 12 percent, consuming 18.5 of total consumption, and people consuming from 151 to 250 kilowatts number 458,000, a share of 8 percent of the number of users, accounting for 18 percent of total consumption. People who consume from 251 to 400 kilowatt hours number 191,000 users, a share of 3 percent of the number of users, accounting for 12 percent of total consumption, and the people consuming 401 or more number 93,000 users, a share of 2 percent of the number of users, consuming 17 percent of total overall electricity consumption.

The Strongest Proof

The minister said, "These statistics are the strongest proof that excesses in the use of electricity exist among the highest classes of electricity users. Therefore, it is necessary to limit these patterns of consumption

and save electric power for production. Therefore, when we declare that subsidies for affluent classes which consume massive amounts of electricity have been reduced, we are being fair, while asserting that the limited income classes, which are the overwhelming majority of the citizens, are not being adversely affected."

I said, "What are the government's recommendations on the guidance of consumption in household and commercial uses?"

At this point Eng Mahir Abazah clearly spelled out effective, specific recommendations which experts and technicians at a high level of competence, study and expertise had arrived at, stating "These recommendations are:

"To guide electric activity resulting from the operation of television sets, since this activity is estimated at about 200 megawatts during the periods of transmission of mass programs, such as serials, movies and soccer matches, and about 135 megawatts during ordinary transmission periods throughout the republic. What is recommended is that television transmission times be set at 6 hours a day while the mass programs are shifted from the evening peak period.

"To limit the use of electric appliances which use relatively great energy, now that a wave in the use of electric appliances consuming great power, such as electric heaters, electric household ovens, air conditioners, automatic washing machines and large refrigerators, has become widespread in recent years.

"To use solar heaters to heat water to provide electricity while putting these heaters in general use by granting users material incentives with the goal of reducing the purchase price of these heaters, so that the costs of using them will be economic.

"To guide the rate of increase in activity in towns and villages and limit hookups of large meters; it is necessary to adopt measures which will guarantee that rates of new connections for ordinary users will also be controlled.

"To guide the electricity consumption of shops. It is proposed that the times for laws on discipline applied in the winter of 1980 be applied to towns in the republic in general; it is expected that this will save 110 megawatts of energy.

"To prohibit electrical ornaments. The target is to realize savings in electric power consumption for household and commercial uses of 10 percent a year for 3 years; the savings will then drop to 5 percent a year for a period of 7 consecutive years. In the framework of overall electric power consumption, the first 3 years will come to 3 percent a year and the 7 successive years 1.5 percent."

Utilities and the Government

Concerning consumption and consumption guidance in utilities and government bodies, the minister went on to say,

"Energy for public lighting in towns and villages comes to about 100 megawatts, and the situation requires that one not further intensify the illumination in public lighting but reduce it after midnight, limit the lighting on farm roads and set up electric light systems to confirm that streets are not lit during the day and in the morning.

"Electric power savings are aimed at facilities and government bodies, at a rate of 10 percent the first 3 years and 5 percent the following 7 years. If the use represents 10 percent of total electric power consumption, the savings to be realized relative to total consumption will be 1 percent the first 3 years and 0.5 percent the following 7 years.

"Therefore, total targeted savings in electric power consumption in the following 5 years will be as follows: 7 percent the first year, 6.4 percent the second year and 5.8 percent the third year. If the policy of guiding energy consumption and realizing targeted savings bears fruit, the rates of the annual increase in electric power consumption will be within the limits of the rates of development."

I said, "Where are the subsidies the government pays out for electricity? What is their value annually?"

The minister said, in these simple terms, "The government pays out subsidies estimated at about \$835 million a year, the value of the difference between the subsidized price for the supply of heavy fuel oil to electricity plants, which comes to \$10 per ton, and the world price, which comes to \$200 per ton. If subsidies continue in this form, Egypt will need 29 million tons of oil a year in 2000 just for the electricity sector--that is, subsidies will come to more than \$5.5 billion, if the price of oil does not rise above the current level.

"When we realize that producing a kilowatt hour of electricity to reach the consumer costs the government about 80 milliemes, whereas the government gets just 18 milliemes per kilowatt hour from individuals and much less than that in the case of consumption by industries of a national character:

"Then the government must provide subsidies for classes which are not affluent. As for the affluent, they must bear part of the costs, realizing that they also will receive subsidies, although at a lower rate than the limited income and consumption classes, in addition to indirect subsidies which citizens receive, embodied in the acquisition of goods and services which consume electricity at a subsidized price also."

I asked, "Who, then, will the subsidies be for specifically?"

The minister said, "The subsidies will be for agriculture and land reclamation projects to produce food for local consumption, for the production of fertilizer needed for farmland, for domestic industries which rely on local raw materials, so that subsidies will not be for foreigners, and, of course, for consumption in the case of citizens with limited incomes and low levels of consumption, not the class of big consumers." The conversation will continue.

11887

CSO: 4504/177

SUDAN

MAJOR DISSIDENT LEADER IS RELEASED FROM PRISON

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 92, 12 Jan 85 pp 15, 16

[Article: "Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, from the Kawbar Prison to Omdurman: The Partisans' Lake Remains Calm and the Reasons for the Arrest Still Exist"]

[Text] Since his emergence from Kawbar prisons in Khartoum, the Omdurman home of Mr al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, the Sudanese figure with great status locally and in the Arab and Islamic contexts, has been filled with visitors approaching him at many times of the day and night to greet him on his safe departure from prison.

Disruptions in the telephone lines between the Sudan and the outer world recently prevented many of his friends and acquaintances from getting in contact with Mr al-Sadiq and greeting him by telephone. These include his daughter Randah, who is studying pharmacy at Riyadh University in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and his other daughter Maryam, who is continuing her university studies at the Jordanian University, as well as his son 'Abd-al-Rahman, who joined the Military College in Jordan a few days before his father's release.

However, the al-Mahdi family members who left Khartoum last week (some of whom went to Jiddah, others to Riyadh) brought good news about al-Sadiq, one item being that his morale was good, although some confusion appeared in his statement during a sermon he gave to the masses of the Sect of Partisans after his departure from prison. AL-TADAMUN noted this confusion when it heard a tape recording brought by one of the Partisans who had left Khartoum. This confusion indicates that the long days of prison had left some adverse effects on al-Sadiq's spirit.

Al-Sadiq al-Mahdi gave that sermon at the al-Hijrah mosque in Wad Nubawi on Friday, 21 December 1984, that is, 3 days after his departure from prison.

In this sermon, al-Sadiq al-Mahdi spoke in an emotional, mystic way about the period of imprisonment and the circumstances of detention. He kept saying "beloved people" often as he was addressing his partisans at prayer.

One of the things he said in the sermon was "There are numerous advantages to prison. Prison is a psychological state, and anyone who considers his imprisonment a dowry for his position willingly pays a high dowry for the sake of this costly position. The dowry of a person who gives sermons to the virtuous should be costly."

In his sermon, which by the way took about 12 minutes, he also said, "The people there included persons for whom imprisonment was a spiritual retreat, a cultural school or an intellectual pause for thought, that is, it was a clinic for reflection, study and contemplation. There were people whose hearts were filled with God, whose consciousness was inflamed with understanding. I would put them where I wished, and they would overflow from within over the sublimity, grace and happiness around them. Prison is a respite from the comfort and ease of the word and an exposure to hardship which is an asset of life and a necessary Islamic educational curriculum for every devout person. It was said in old times, 'toughen up; comfort is not permanent.' That day the pure spirited one, on whom be God's prayers and peace, shook a hand, found that it was rough, and kissed it out of appreciation and respect."

The sermon also stated, "Prison is a gathering of oppressed persons who are given a broad opportunity to learn directly about the conditions of many people and this gives those who so wish an opportunity to become good at surgery, dry tears, treat the wounded and show mercy to those on earth who aspire to the mercy of the one who is in heaven. During this period we were harmed, we were insulted and things were said about us that a drunkard would say, but we did not offer a word in response to anything that was said about us by way of slander or accusation, yielding to his almighty order 'Be patient, for your patience is only for God.'

"There also is an educational commitment: 'Do not make our hearts violate the words of our tongues.' Aside from being the duty of faith and historic fate which thousands of people have traced out, this commitment makes it mandatory whether we accept or reject it, that we fight and exercise individual judgment for the sake of God and for the sake of the interests of the nation and that we do so with powers which find rest only in the grave, God willing, and after death will be a model for children and grandchildren. In doing so, we do not claim tutelage over anyone or benefits which accrue to one person to the exclusion of another; rather, we believe that the affairs of Islam concern all the people who pray to Mecca, of whom we are a part, and the affairs of the Sudan concern all its citizens, of whom we are a part. Proceeding from this premise, we cooperate and interact with everyone for the sake of religion and the nation, we do not belittle anyone's rights and we do not want anyone to belittle our rights. If we have expatiated on any of these positions or discussions, we do not make spiritual claims with which to dominate others."

It appears that Mr al-Sadiq and the masses of the sect of the Partisans benefited from two lessons, both of which contributed to the emergence of sensitive feelings fraught with much asperity on the part of the regime--sensitive feelings which in their turn became exacerbated and ultimately led the regime to the decision to put al-Sadiq al-Mahdi and the leadership group of Partisans supporting his leadership in prison. The first lesson was embodied in the Partisans' muscle-flexing witnessed on Aba Island, when the oath of allegiance was made to al-Sadiq as the sect's imam. It was apparent to some of al-Sadiq's friends who studied the videotape on which the occurrences of this oath of allegiance were recorded that this muscle-flexing would not come to a good end and that the government would not easily tolerate a "state" within the state. The second lesson occurred suddenly, after a similar muscle-flexing, although in a form devoid of swords, musical groups, horsemen and loudspeakers surrounding the rituals of the oath of allegiance in Aba Island. Khartoum was the stage of the second lesson, in the wake of President Numayri's declaration that he intended

to apply Islamic law. What happened was that al-Sadiq al-Mahdi had declared a position in the Friday prayer sermon which was contradictory to what President Numayri wanted to apply. Although this position was not one of rejection, the difference with which it was marked created a feeling on President Numayri's part that it was necessary to put al-Sadiq and a group of Partisan leaders in prison. It is most likely that President Numayri assumed that his approach would meet with overwhelming popular support, in which case al-Sadiq's position would be weak, but the contest continued, and al-Sadiq and those who were with him remained in prison until President Numayri confirmed that it was no longer feasible to keep al-Sadiq in prison.

What helped to reach the decision to effect the release was that the masses of the Partisans did not become agitated during the period of imprisonment of al-Sadiq and the people who were with him did not demonstrate, were not active and did not engage in any attempts at pressure, for the reason that the Partisans' lake remained calm for more than a year. Had it not been for communications of a political nature which Mrs Sarah al-Mahdi, Mr al-Sadiq's wife, carried out in some Arab and Islamic capitals, there would not have been any activity at all aimed at ensuring the release of the imprisoned group. Some stages of this activity were greeted with intense displeasure on the part of some circles in the regime.

In addition to that, some people who left Khartoum last week—one of whom brought the tape on which the Friday sermon we summarized in the lines above had been recorded—relate that most of the people visiting al-Sadiq to greet and congratulate him wonder about the reason for the remarkably trim state of his physique and whether he suffered from some disease which afflicted him while he was imprisoned. Al-Sadiq's explanation was that he had learned from previous periods of imprisonment after the May 1969 revolution that imprisonment causes obesity if the prisoner does not regulate his eating activities and if he does not engage in some athletic activity. He added that he was extremely attentive to this matter and thus was able to preserve his physical fitness to the point where his weight dropped below what it had been before.

One of the people who left Khartoum relates that as soon as the flow of well-wishes declined, al-Sadiq devoted himself to resuming the pursuit of his preferred exercise, the sport of polo, which he pursues in the equestrian club located in south Khartoum. He also resumed the pursuit of his other favorite sport, tennis, in the tennis club near Khartoum airport. There are other sports of a violent, harsh nature which al-Sadiq resumed pursuing, while it was not easy for him to pursue them inside the Kawbar prison.

The person telling the story also says that the people greeting and visiting al-Sadiq were not limited to the members of his groups. They were many people who had come from distant areas in the Sudan, the east, west and center, and that most officials in the government visited him as well. One of these was his close friend Abu-al-Qasim Muhammad Ibrahim, who has been slated for a more brilliant role in Sudanese political life. This initiative on Abu-al-Qasim Muhammad Ibrahim's part was not the first of its kind, since he had previously visited al-Sadiq at his home in the wake of the national reconciliation in 1979.

In the first days, the person telling the story goes on, al-Sadiq received his well-wishes in the company of comrades from prison, but after that they all went to their homes or their regions. Those whose homes are there remained in Omdurman -- 'Umar Nur-al-Da'im, Mubarak 'Abd-al-Wahhab Ghanidi, Mirghani Dayfallah, Hasan Ahmad al-Hasan and Salah 'Abd-al-Salam Khalifah. The others went to their own regions: Khalid Muhammad Ibrahim, the chairman of the department of Partisan affairs, returned to Aba Island (and as soon as he arrived received greetings on the one hand and condolences on the other, since his father had died when he was in prison), Bakri Udayl went to al-'Ubayyid and 'Abd-al-Rasul al-Nur had gone back to al-Mujlad in Kordofan. The latter had been released a few weeks ago. Also, Mr Ahmad Khalifah was released; 'Uthman Jadallah had been released a week before al-Sadiq and the others.

A question remains: what will al-Sadiq al-Mahdi do now that he has left Kawbar prison?

What AL-TADAMUN can say, in answer to this, is that the man will not leave the Sudan at the present time and that he will devote himself to sorting out his papers, which he wrote while in prison, preparatory to readying them for publication. In addition to that, he will restrict his political activity to a lecture here, a Friday sermon there, or an evaluation of conditions in the course of meetings with his official and non-official visitors.

It is most likely that he will leave the regime no chance to put him back in Kawbar, unless developments and surprises occur which had not been taken into account.

In the world of politics and politicians, the opportunities for surprises are too great to be counted.

11887

CSO: 4504/189

IRAQ

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DISCUSSES 1985 BUDGET

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 30 Dec 84 p 6

[Text] The National Assembly devoted yesterday evening's meeting, attended by Mr Hasan 'Ali, member of the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) and minister of trade, and the ministers of finance and planning, to discussing and establishing a foreign trade policy, investment programs, and the financial budget for 1985.

Foreign Trade Plan

At the beginning of the session Dr Sa'dun Hamadi welcomed the member of the RCC and minister of trade and the ministers of finance and planning. He said, "During this session we will hear reports from the ministers and the heads of the finance and planning committee, the legal and administrative affairs committee and the trade and agriculture committee pertaining to three important documents, the foreign trade program, the draft budget, and the investment program for 1985." Then the speaker of the Assembly invited the ministers and heads of committees to the dais, and Mr Hasan 'Ali, member of the RCC and minister of trade, began reading his report on the foreign trade program. He said, "I am pleased and happy today to present to the representatives of the people the foreign trade program with its import and export aspects. The program is based on substantive fundamentals of satisfying the needs of the country and the requirements of local production. The program has demonstrated the firmness of the Iraqi economy, the strengthening of its influence, and the protection of the gains of the revolution for developing the advance of our country under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn. The program has assigned greater importance to importing the basic necessary commodities having a direct relationship to the war effort and the lives of the people. It has also assigned great importance to making available those things required for the manufacturing, service and industrial projects that play a fundamental role in satisfying consumption and export needs, bearing in mind that importation is to be entirely for production, to insure the availability of stand-by equipment and spare parts, and to cover the needs of economic and private activity.

The Fiscal Budget and the Investment Plan

After the minister of trade concluded his report the Speaker of the National Assembly invited the finance minister to read his report pertaining to the

current draft budget. He gave it in a general fashion, focusing on rationalizing consumption and reducing unnecessary spending. He was followed by the minister of planning, who read the report on the investment program. He said that it was committed to establishing firmly the march of advancement, realizing maximum progress and development, and supporting victory over the enemy. He reviewed the more important basic features of the investment program and the main trends that include adequate concern for the production sectors, special concentration on strategic projects, and extensive provision for the basic services directly affecting the people.

After this the speaker of the Assembly invited Mr Jawad Abu-al-Hubb, chairman of the Planning and Financial Affairs Committee of the Assembly, to read the committee's report. He explained that the trade program gave priority to the war effort and the necessary commodities directly effecting the life of the people. The committee noted that the allocations for 1985 exceed those of 1984. He also made observations on the budget plan and the investment program and invited the assembly members to vote and approve the three documents.

Then Mr Hamid al-Sa'adi, chairman of the Agricultural and Trade Affairs Committee, read the committee's report on the foreign trade program and the annual investment program and called for approval and adoption of their content.

Mr Hamed al-Rawi, chairman of the Committee for Legal and Administrative Affairs, came forward and read the committee's report, which recommended confirmation of the budget ordinance.

Comments of the Assembly Members

After this a great many members of the National Assembly asked to speak, while several others presented written questions and inquiries as well as numerous suggestions as follows.

Importing medicines, the current draft budget, a plan for pricing goods of the socialist and private sectors, the need for putting a limit to the greed of private business owners, importing small inexpensive sedans for the needs of the people because they are practical and good, an inquiry about the method of importing on credit, the need for putting a mark to distinguish between the goods of the private sector and the goods of the socialist sector.

The ministers and heads of the three committees will take care of answering all the questions and inquiries brought up by members of the National Assembly in today's session.

12496

CSO: 4404/154

IRAQ

MIXED SECTOR A BASIC ELEMENT IN IRAQI NATIONAL INDUSTRIES

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 2 Jan 85 p 4

[Text] During the past few years our national industries have experienced a remarkable development in quantity and quality. The Iraqi citizen, who has begun to prefer most of them over foreign products for several reasons has gained confidence. Some of the reasons are the excellence of these goods, their easy repair, and the deep national feeling that the Iraqi citizen enjoys in supporting and encouraging the national industries. The role of the national industry has emerged and it satisfied a good percentage of local demand during the war and its special conditions.

The mixed sector is one of the basic sectors of national industry since this sector entered the field of manufacturing about 15 years ago. It occupies the range between the socialist sector, which has responsibility for establishing the strategic projects, and private enterprise, having limited capabilities, which carries out relatively small projects.

To get acquainted with the mixed sector and what it is providing in the way of service to the Iraqi citizen as well as to the national economy, two colleagues from the studies branch met with Mr Naji al-Jaf, head of the General Organization for Industrial Development, in order for him to tell us the facts about this sector, the extent of its development, and its immediate objectives.

He said, "The mixed sector, from a legal standpoint, is a group of corporations in which the state has at least 51 percent of the capital and private enterprise has not more than 49 percent. This sector remained afloat, or without sinking as they say, until the regulation was issued on mixed sector companies, which recognized the nature of this sector and stipulated the responsibilities and powers of the directors and technicians serving there."

We asked the head of the foundation about the manner of choosing the projects and setting them up.

[Answer] The projects of the mixed sector, as you know, are not strategic projects, because such projects are within the special province of the socialist sector. And we do not go into small projects, but leave them to

private enterprise. So we choose projects between the two types. We begin with studying the economics feasibility of the project, so there is economic justification. The second step is to obtain the official authorizations from the proper authorities and to obtain the approval for organization and backing with advice from the industrial bank for founding the firms. Following this there is the contacting of elements of the private sector in order for them to share in the project and contacting the circles that have investment capabilities, such as the office of social security, the general insurance organization, and so on.

[Question] What companies are tied in with you at present?

[Answer] There are 11 companies tied in with the organization at this time. They are:

1. The National Chemical and Plastics Industries Company.
2. The Electronic Industries Company.
3. The Crescent Industrial Company.
4. The National Food Industries Company.
5. The Light Industries Company.
6. The Iraqi Bicycle and Metal Pipe Industry Company.
7. The Modern Pigments Industry Company.
8. The Iraqi Soft Drinks Company.
9. The Ready-Made Clothes Manufacturing Company.
10. The Iraqi Carton Industry Company.
11. The Construction Materials Industry Company.

There are two companies being implemented: the Iraqi Home Equipment Company for Producing Washing Machines, which is expected to begin production in 1986, and a new company that is being established, which is the Iraqi Cosmetics Industry Company.

On another aspect, during 1984 we installed one unit to complete a production for August Sandpaper, and we put into operation the Plastic Parts Plant, with a capacity for 25,000 tons per year, just to indicate the imports of this material, and the carton plant began production.

[Question] What is the production ratio in some of the Iraqi industries, such as Iraqi television?

There is division within the assembly industry, and a policy of assembly in stages. Some, unfortunately, believe that ours are total assembly industries, and that a mistake and causes contempt for the role of national manufacturing and the extent of development of national industries. Regarding Iraqi television, for example, it began with assembly, and we were importing 99 percent of the components from the franchise company, with hard currency. But now this percentage has come down to just 45 percent, and 55 percent of the television parts are manufactured locally. Also the new 20-inch television is altogether an Iraqi design. The Iraqi worker has adjusted to the modern technology and has gained excellent proficiency.

In addition, the Light Industries company has established a high ratio in national manufacturing, but I do not have the exact figure now.

In fact we say that there is no industry in the world that eliminates national production 100 percent, even those of the big, world companies. Some components of the industry are imported within the international division of labor and within the industrial specialization.

[Question] How is coordination carried out between your companies and the other industrial and distribution sectors?

[Answer] There is complete coordination between our organization and its companies on the one hand and the import and distribution system on the other, through the committee that coordinates with the Ministry of Trade, on determining the volume of actual demand, and the scope and size of national production, to determine what should be imported to fill the gap between national production and the actual demand. There are also subcommittees to deal with difficulties that come up during the work. The socialist commercial sector markets all our industrial products.

[Question] Now we come back to the important last question. What has the mixed sector contributed to the national economy during the war?

[Answer] The truth is that the market gives evidence of what service the national industry and the companies of the mixed sector have rendered, and of what a big success they have brought about.

As for the figures, they are one more confirmation of this truth. The companies planned to achieve 170 million dinars worth of production in 1984, but they achieved 171.7 million by the end of November 1984. That is a proven 101 percent during 11 months. This exceeds by 33 percent what was accomplished in all of 1983 and it exceeds by 77 percent what was done in 1980, the year before the war, from a production standpoint.

As for the value of the sales, they increased by 90 percent between 1980 and 1984.

Regarding related production of the sector, from 1 January 1984 to 30 November 1984 this amounted to 30,230 dinars. This is an increase of 113 percent over 1980.

Also, wage productivity as of 30 November 1984 came to 24 dinars [as published]. This is an increase of 42 percent over 1983 and 103 percent over 1980.

As for the rate of development for the period stipulated, in nominal capital the increase came to 37 percent, and in payment capital, to 33 percent. The increase in total investment came to 52 percent.

The figures and others confirm that the mixed sector has brought about extensive development despite war conditions and import pressure, with regard

to primary goods and machines, and the citizens have been furnished with goods to replace the imports. Our output of refrigerators, for instance, has increased from 20,000 to 80,000 to 120,000 in 1980, 83, and 84.

Our national industry has gained the confidence of the Iraqi citizen, after his having preferred foreign goods, and this is what has convinced him to increase demand for the national products as well as the great interest in sharing in our new companies. The demand for shares in the Iraqi Cosmetics Industry Company, in only 3 days, doubled the announced price. And the announcement is supposed to continue for a whole month.

12496

CSO: 4404/154

SYRIA

PRIME MINISTER VISITS IDLIB, DISCUSSES ECONOMY

Description of Visit

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 23 Dec 84 p 3

[Text] At the end of the week, the Governorate of Idlib experienced 2 days of celebration, impassioned emotion and national sentiment when its masses expressed the love and faith they harbored for the national and domestic program of their leader, the fighting president Hafiz al-Asad.

At the same time, their party and government leaders experienced 2 days of unremitting work and constant meetings as they discussed the economic, social and employment situation in the governorate as well as all ways and means for advancing and accelerating this governorate's progress in various fields with the government delegation.

By directive of President Hafiz al-Asad, Dr 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasim, the prime minister, made a field trip to the Governorate of Idlib at the head of a party and government delegation to learn about the projects and issues of the governorate and take decisions and measures which would promote its development.

Accompanying the prime minister on this visit were Mr Walid Hamdun, deputy prime minister for service affairs, Mr 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, the minister of the interior, the minister of state for planning affairs and local administration, and the ministers of irrigation, housing and utilities.

During his visit to Idlib, the prime minister met with delegations representing the various organizations, unions, federations, bodies and activities in the city and governorate of Idlib in the presence of his deputies and the ministers. These delegations expressed their thanks and appreciation for this visit, which is to be considered very important and a generous form of recognition on President Hafiz al-Asad's part.

In the course of those 2 days, a group of working meetings were held to discuss memorandums on the governorate's situation and needs. The ministers and the two deputy prime ministers held meetings with the relevant bodies in

the governorate which concerned their ministries, and at the end of the visit an expanded meeting was held under the chairmanship of the prime minister including the members of the party and government delegation, the secretary of the party branch, the governor, the directors general of the companies and specialists in the governorate in which the people who had met discussed the recommendations and memoranda presented by officials in the governorate on transportation, irrigation, drinking water, sanitary drainage, road and bridge systems, organizational plans, health, the condition of the municipalities and means for developing them. At the end of the meeting, measures were taken which would promote the development of the governorate in these areas.

In order for us to become fully informed of the accomplishments which were realized on behalf of the Governorate of Idlib during this visit, before we review them in detail, we will cite the last paragraph of the statement by the prime minister at his last meeting with the party and government leaders in the governorate, in which he said:

"Our leader President Hafiz al-Asad has directed us to respond to all Idlib's demands, and this is what we have done during this visit to this fighting, struggling governorate."

Now let us review the sufferings of this governorate in various fields, as the officials of the governorate have described them to us, as well as the measures the party and government delegation has taken to remedy them, in some detail.

Numerous Governorate Economic Statistics

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 23 Dec 84 p 3

[Text] Statistical Information on Idlib Governorate

The statistical compendium issued by the Central Statistics Bureau for 1984 states:

The population of Idlib Governorate came to about 644,000 in 1984; the population will rise to 756,000 in 1990 and slightly more than a million (1,019,000) in 2000.

The governorate is broken down into five administrative regions, to which belong:

15 subdistricts.

16 towns.

411 villages.

481 farms.

Six cities, which can be ranked by population as follows: Idlib, Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, Khan Shaykhun, Jisr al-Shughur, Ariha and Harim.

Idlib is considered an important governorate in the area of agriculture, which is considered its inhabitants' main activity, since 80 percent of the people there live in rural areas and rely mostly on agriculture as their basic source of livelihood.

The area of the Governorate of Idlib comes to about 610,000 hectares, broken down as follows:

14,000 hectares of irrigated land.

209,000 hectares of unirrigated land.

37,000 hectares left fallow for rejuvenation.

62,000 hectares of pastures and meadows.

150,000 hectares of non-agricultural land occupied by buildings, lakes and rocky terrain.

The agriculturally exploited land in the Governorate of Idlib lies mainly within the two areas of agricultural settlement, the first and the second. We find that of its total area, which comes to 304,000 hectares:

73 percent lies within the first agricultural settlement area.

22 percent lies within the second agricultural settlement area.

Five percent lies within the third agricultural settlement area.

In accordance with the land reform laws, an area of 84,000 hectares of farmland had been taken over and distributed to peasants by 1976.

The governorate is considered one of the important ones in the country in terms of fruit trees, since it occupies second place in the production of olives, of which its output is estimated this year at about 125,000 tons, as well as realizing high figures in grain, cotton and sugar beet crop production. The rate of sugar beet production in the governorate this year came to about 65 tons per hectare.

In the Area of Railways and Roads

The railway extends only 12 kilometers beyond the city of Idlib, which keeps it from serving the main economic installations in the governorate by rail. In order to guarantee that this service is provided and solve the passenger crisis, the governorate has carried out a study which has concluded with the following recommendations:

Construction of a branch line for the railway going to Idlib.

Construction of a bridge at the intersection of the railway line passing from Bashmarwan on the main Idlib-Harim road.

Construction of two bridges on the Bab al-Hawa road which intersects with the old Idlib-Aleppo road and the new Idlib-Saraqib road at the entrance to the city of Idlib.

The construction of a new bridge in addition to the current one erected over the Orontes River in the town of Jisr al-Shughur.

The construction of a bridge at the intersection of the Saraqib-Hamah road and the entrance to al-Ma'arra and Khan Shaykhun, in view of the high incidence of traffic accidents.

Widening and maintenance of some central roads and extension of an oil coating for them in various places.

The Condition of Services and Utilities in the City and Governorate of Idlib

The Idlib city council suffers from a financial deficit and inability to carry out investment projects, since it is unable to pay its commitments even in the case of projects where construction efforts have been completed. The city is also unable to carry out important projects which had previously been studied and are in the course of being awarded.

In the area of roads, the city is suffering from an inability to pay the prices of the plots it has expropriated and on which it has built new streets. The new al-Thawrah section also needs sidewalk, backup and repaving work.

In the area of sanitary drainage systems, the city council has constructed 20 kilometers of the sewer system, which has a total length of 45 kilometers, and construction was suspended because of a lack of availability of resources, in spite of the urgent need to keep sewer overflow out of the basements of residences.

The city lacks a public park and industrial zone, and some of its streets need lighting. It is also planning to construct a riverside road connecting up the entrances to the city.

As regards the governorate municipalities, which are 75 in number, the report the governorate prepared on them mentions the following points:

Fifteen new municipalities were established this year, 1984.

Fourteen new municipalities were established in 1983.

There are 22 municipalities in the governorate which do not have plans for their areas of jurisdiction and for which there are no topographical studies, although the performance of such surveys is included in the current 5-year plan.

Some plans for some towns and cities in the governorate need to be studied and have changes made to them, in order that expansions may be made in them.

The municipalities which have been re-established still lack resources which require financial assistance to enable them to provide some necessary services for citizens.

In the Area of Drinking Water

In this area, a memorandum presented to the prime minister says that there has been a need to set out new investment projects to support existing ones and to provide drinking water for villages which have not yet been supplied with it.

The drop in the level of the water table in the Idlib-Ariha water project, which irrigates the city of Idlib and 10 other villages, has resulted in the depletion of two of the project's 10 wells; therefore, thought is being given to using the 'Ayn al-Zarqa' spring near the Orontes River, into which it flows, so that its water flows unexploited to Turkey. As a result, it will be a source for the Idlib-Ariha project and a permanent water source for 30 adjacent villages. The referendum referred to the need to guarantee that the electrical connection is tied in to the stations of the project which exists at present to guarantee that water is supplied to citizens in permanent, continuous fashion.

The al-Ma'arra water project: although construction of the first phase of the project, which provides water to the city of al-Ma'arra, the adjacent villages and the villages in al-Zawiyah mountain, has been completed, we find that these communities are suffering from a water shortage. In addition, work on the second stage of the project will be finished at the start of 1985; this will cause the project to suffer a large water deficit, and that requires that its water source at the al-Labah site be studied. The Ministry of Irrigation has not done this, in spite of the deputy prime minister's directives to that effect in July 1983.

The Khan Shaykhun water project. Three wells are no longer enough to provide water for the city, and the drilling of 10 new wells will result in a decline in the water table in the area. Therefore a study recommends that the possibility of supplying potable water to the city and the adjacent villages from the 'Ayn al-Taqa spring, which is 25 kilometers away from it, be studied.

The Abu Talhah water project which supplies water to Salqin, Kafr Takharim and Armanaz is suffering from a 60 percent decline in capacity although not more than 3 years have elapsed since it was put to use. This requires that its water sources be studied and a solution be set out which will eliminate the decline which has occurred in its capacity.

In the Area of Agriculture and Irrigation

The memorandum presented to the prime minister in this regard recommends the following:

A study of the condition of the al-Rawj plain (irrigation, drainage and grading).

The construction of a veterinary laboratory and provision of the necessary equipment for it.

The construction of a system of farm roads to ensure ease of transportation of crops and various agricultural services.

In the Area of Antiquities and Tourist Activity

The Governorate of Idlib possesses great archaeological importance because of the large number of archaeological hills and towns and Byzantine, Roman and Islamic historic buildings it contains. Therefore, in order to encourage visits to these, the governorate considers that:

Fifteen roads should be built leading to the archaeological areas, each one ranging from 1 to 6 kilometers in length, for an overall length of 48 kilometers.

A number of guest houses should be built and the existing produce market near the national museum should be expropriated.

Tourist facilities should be built in the 'Ayn al-Zarqa' area.

A tourist hotel should be built in the governorate.

In the Area of Health

In the Governorate of Idlib there is a single government hospital containing 220 beds; that is, there is one bed for every 3,000 citizens in the governorate.

This hospital suffers from a lack of space in the surgical ward and obsolescence of equipment, and it lacks a maternity ward, as well as surgeons, of whom there are no more than two. In addition, the health department is lacking in equipment.

Government Delegation Promises Improvements

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 23 Dec 84 p 3

[Text] Following the field visit the government delegation made under the chairmanship of the prime minister, Dr 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Kasim, and the series of meetings the delegation members held to discuss the governorate's situation and projects, a concluding meeting was held under the chairmanship of the prime minister, in the attendance of some directors general in the organizations and companies and specialized directors in the ministries concerned. In the course of that, a group of decisions were taken which will support the development process in Idlib Governorate and will upgrade its facilities in various areas. These decisions came about in response to most of the needs of the city and governorate of Idlib, which can be highlighted by a rapid comparison between these decisions and the needs of the governorate which we reviewed in the article published alongside.

What about these decisions?

In the Area of Railways and Roads

1 [sic]. The Syrian General Railway Organization was assigned to carry out an economic study on the branch railway to extend from Ma'arrat al-Ikhwan to Idlib, provided that it be submitted to the Office of the Prime Minister via the State Planning Authority.

The Syrian General Railway Organization will be assigned to hand over the study in its possession on the subject of the construction of a bridge at the intersection of the railway line passing from Bashmarun and the main Idlib-Harim road to the Technical Services Department and the necessary allocation of about 2.5 million Syrian pounds in the 1985 budget will be provided by the State Planning Authority on behalf of technical services in the governorate.

The Ministry of Transportation will be assigned to study the construction of two bridges on the Bab al-Hawa road which intersects the Aleppo-Idlib road at the entrance of the city of Idlib and it will present the necessary recommendations on that to the Office of the Prime Minister.

The Military Works Construction Organization will be assigned to hand over the study it has prepared on the construction of a new bridge over the Orontes River in the city of Jisr al-Shughur to the Ministry of Transportation so that it can examine this study, with the provision that its conclusions will be presented to the Higher Planning Council at its coming session, and it will be assigned to allocate the necessary construction credits of approximately 2 million Syrian pounds to the annual plan for 1985.

The Ministry of Communications will be assigned to study the problem at the intersection of the Saraqib-Hamah road and the al-Ma'arra and Khan Shaykhun turnoffs. This study will be considered an integral part of the construction of the second stage of the Saraqib-Hamah road.

The prime minister gave agreement to the formation of a technical committee formed by the Ministry of Transportation and the Governorates of Idlib and Latakia to determine the route of the border roads between the two governorates. The necessary allocations will be set aside by the State Planning Authority in the light of the executive engineering studies for these roads, and they will be carried out by the technical services departments in these two governorates.

The Ministry of Transportation will be assigned to study and carry out the improvement of turns, narrow stretches and dangerous locations in the following roads in 1985:

The Bab al-Hawa-Harim-Salqin road.

The Salqin-Darkush-Jisr al-Shaghur road.

The Ariha-Ma'arrat al-Nu'man road.

The governorate will be assigned to widen these roads with its own equipment, on condition that expropriation allowances not be paid out for any section of these roads.

The Ministry of Transportation will be assigned to appropriate and examine the engineering study on the Aleppo-Idlib-Ariha-Latakia road and study the possibility of constructing it during the sixth 5-year plan.

The economic committee will be requested to speed up the study of the appendix to the contract on the Hazzanwa-Idlib road and the General Road Construction Company will be assigned to build and return its workshops to the work areas at once.

Agreement has been made to form a committee out of the following bodies:

The Ministry of Tourism.

The State Planning Authority.

The General Department of Antiquities and Museums.

The Governorate of Idlib.

Its task will be to study the roads leading to archaeological sites in the governorate and rank them within the order of priorities. The State Planning Authority has been assigned to allocate the sum of 10 million Syrian pounds in the 1985 budget to construct these roads in accordance with the conclusions this committee reaches, provided that the governorate carry out the executive engineering study for them.

Agreement has been given to opening up a letter of credit from the Syrian Commercial Bank of approximately \$6 million for the General Department of Telecommunications dial microwave project.

Second: In the Area of Housing and Utilities

Agreement has been given to transfer a sum of 5 million Syrian pounds from the Ministry of Housing and Utilities to the Governorate of Idlib so that it may directly contract with the branch of the General Technical Studies and Consulting Company in Aleppo to carry out the topographical designs included in the Ministry of Housing and Public Utilities annual plan for 1984 regarding the Governorate of Idlib, provided that the governorate carefully confine itself to the 1984 technical conditions approved by the Ministry of Housing and Utilities.

The Ministry of Housing and Utilities will be assigned to complete a study on the sewage water treatment plant in the city of Idlib covering construction and mechanical work for 1985, provided that the sixth 5-year construction plan be set out.

The Ministries of Housing and Utilities and Irrigation will be assigned to study the use of 'Ayn al-Zarqa' water for the sake of:

Increasing the acreage of the irrigated area on the al-Rawj plain.

Preserving the water reserves in the al-Rawj plain over the long term.

Supporting the project to provide water to the cities of Idlib and Ariha and provide water for adjacent villages.

Agreeing to allocate a sum of 1 million Syrian pounds in the 1985 budget on behalf of the Idlib Ariha Water Organization with the objective of completing the connection of electricity hookups to existing water stations in the Idlib Ariha project.

The Ministry of Housing and Utilities and the Ministry of Irrigation will be assigned to carry out the executive engineering study on the Khan Shaykhun water project in 1985, with the provision that the project be put in the sixth 5-year plan for execution.

The Ministry of Housing and Utilities will be assigned to devise the optimum solution for supplying the al-Ma'arra water project.

The Ministry of Housing and Utilities and the Ministry of Irrigation will be assigned to study the Abu Talhah water project which is now underway concerning the provision of water for the following communities:

Salqin, Kafr Takharim, Ardaz and the villages adjacent to them.

This will cover a study of the aquifer from the geological, hydrological and geophysical standpoints and evaluation of water reserves with the objective of eliminating the decline that has occurred in the project.

Third: In the Area of Irrigation and Farming

1. The Ministry of Irrigation has been assigned to carry out a study of the actual state of the al-Rawj plain from the standpoint of:

Irrigation, drainage and levelling in 1985, provided that the project be put into execution in the sixth 5-year plan.

The Ministry of Agriculture will be assigned to establish a veterinary laboratory and supply it with the necessary equipment for that.

Fourth: In the Area of Tourist Activity

1. The Governorate of Idlib has been assigned to monitor the construction of tourist hotels to be built in the city of Idlib together with the Ministry of Tourism with the objective of completing the project, now that the engineering and construction study on it has been performed by the ministry concerned.

Fifth: In the Area of Health

The Health Department in the Governorate of Idlib has been assigned to study the construction of a maternity wing in the existing hospital or in the

1,090-bed hospital which has not yet been put into operation (formerly the health quarantine area).

Agreement has been made to import modern technical equipment and opening the credits necessary to purchase equipment for digestive tract monitoring, eye equipment, elevators and so forth.

The governorate has been assigned to specify the names of surgeons who are performing military service and people working in the Idlib hospital for appointment to the hospital, provided that these names be presented to the Office of the Prime Minister so that it may perform the necessary work.

Sixth: In the Area of the City of Idlib

Agreement has been given to grant the city council financial aid of 12,178,000 Syrian pounds to pay off commitments devolving on the municipality in 1985 for the construction of projects and investments, as follows:

Roads, 4 million Syrian pounds.

Sewers, 5.28 million Syrian pounds.

Construction, 800 million [sic] Syrian pounds.

Lighting, 250 million Syrian pounds.

Parks, 800 million Syrian pounds.

Mechanical means of transport, 810 million Syrian pounds.

Firefighting, 310 million Syrian pounds.

Agreement has been given to grant the Idlib city council financial aid totalling 30 million Syrian pounds to construct new projects in 1985 as follows:

Road projects, 7,134,000 Syrian pounds.

Sewer projects, 5,790,000 Syrian pounds.

Construction projects, 5,081,000 Syrian pounds.

Lighting projects, 1.5 million Syrian pounds.

Park projects, 10,495,000 Syrian pounds.

Overall total, 30 million Syrian pounds.

The State Planning Authority has been assigned to amend this municipality's budget when it is discussed by the higher planning council at its next session so that its total budget will total 42,178,000.

The Idlib city council has been assigned to submit expropriation projects for the old city in accordance with Law 20 for 1983 to the competent bodies for their ratification, original issuance and subsequent adoption of necessary measures in their regard by the city council.

Seventh: In the Area of Technical Services

Agreement to increase investments for the following projects:

A. Education buildings, around 800,000 Syrian pounds, for replacement and extensions.

B. Education buildings, around 13,723,000 Syrian pounds, for projects carried over from the fourth 5-year plan.

C. Branch roads, around 11,331,000 Syrian pounds, for road maintenance.

Aid to the City of Al-Ma'arra

Agreement to grant the al-Ma'arra city council financial aid of 5 million Syrian pounds.

50 Million for Grade Four Municipalities

Agreement to grant the councils of grade four cities, towns and municipalities in Idlib Governorate financial aid totalling 50 million Syrian pounds.

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CSO: 4404/169

SYRIA

DAYR AL-ZAWR GOVERNORATE ANNOUNCES 1985 BUDGET

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 17 Dec 84 p 3

[Article by Khalil Iqtayni: "Dayr al-Zawr: Governorate Council Has Approved Next Year's Budget, with Expenditure of 136 Million Pounds"]

[Text] Qasim Matar, the deputy chairman of the Executive Bureau of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate's Council, asserted that the governorate's budget for next year is estimated at 136 million Syrian pounds, with an increase of 17 million pounds over this year's budget, which amounted to 119 million Syrian pounds.

He added that this new budget is distributed as follows:

The share of the education sector of this budget amounts to 74.58 million pounds, of the cultural sector to 681,000 pounds, of the social affairs and labor sector to 2,399,000 pounds, of the health sector to 19,628,000 pounds, of the supply sector to 1,801,000 pounds, of the technical services sector to 18,161,000 pounds, of the agricultural sector to 16,388,000 pounds and of the transportation sector to 480,600 pounds.

Within these main sectors, these sums are distributed over numerous provisions, paragraphs and sections to insure accurate spending. We have also learned that the budget has been subjected to detailed discussions by the Governorate Council members before it took its current form. This is what brought the following question to mind:

How did these discussions take place and, moreover, what were the discussions about? We presented this question to Qasim Matar and he said we could read the minutes of the Governorate Council meeting, which include all the details of the discussions which took place regarding the budget.

The Governorate Council's secretary said that the minutes are still on silk paper [as published], that no copies have been made yet and that he would correct the situation. At this point, the governorate secretary came in and the council secretary explained the situation to him. The governorate secretary said that he was truly surprised by such a question on our part, meaning our question about the discussions. When we asked him what was surprising in the question, he said that he was accustomed to other

journalists asking for the volume of the budget. We told him that every journalist has his approach and his way of writing. He then bid us farewell and departed. Moments later, he sent his messengers' to summon the council secretary to his office. Shortly afterwards, the latter returned to tell us:

We consider the minutes of the Governorate Council meetings confidential and permit nobody to read them.

Can you give us further explanation?

There is no possibility of letting you read the minutes.

This time, we were the ones who were amazed and surprised because this was the first time we ever heard that such minutes were confidential and that media people were not allowed to read them. Our proof is the numerous articles we have published in our paper, and even in the other papers, about such meetings and about what is more important than such meetings. We have done so by virtue of the fact that we consider ourselves one of the parties concerned with these issues, working together with these parties to achieve one goal and one message.

We bade the council secretary farewell after lauding his strong concern and eagerness for the "confidential" minutes of such "serious" meetings. It so happens that our question remains unanswered until further notice, which we hope will not be too long in coming.

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CSO: 4404/163

SYRIA

DROP IN COTTON PRODUCTION, OTHER AGRICULTURAL ISSUES DISCUSSED

Production in al-Raqqah Governorate

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 17 Dec 84 p 3

[Article by Ziyad Malud]

[Text] Al-Raqqah--The agricultural sector in al-Raqqah Governorate has witnessed in recent years a great development in production, especially since the construction of the great Euphrates Dam and the reclamation of large areas of cultivable land which had been excluded from reclamation projects earlier. After the conversion of these vast areas of land from dry farming to irrigated farming and after the introduction of agricultural mechanization into the actual farming processes, several measures have been taken to cultivate strategic crops and to implement the development plans that contribute to strengthening this country's national economy.

TISHRIN interviewed 'Abd-al-Jabbar al-Wasil, the director of agriculture and agrarian reform in al-Raqqah, to explore most features of the major agricultural developments achieved in al-Raqqah Governorate in recent years.

The director of agriculture and agrarian reform in al-Raqqah said: the agricultural issue has received special attention from the political leadership and from President al-Asad. Al-Raqqah Governorate in particular is the country's main source of food. Out of its awareness of the importance of the agricultural issue, the political leadership has devoted extraordinary attention to all spheres and aspects of the agricultural sector. Al-Raqqah Governorate is the best example of comprehensive agricultural development in the country. The Directorate of Agriculture has played a major role in the area of agricultural organization and utilization and through offering agricultural guidance, through fighting crop pests and through providing the best instructions and agricultural information on all kinds of agricultural activities pertaining to all kinds of crops. In the sphere of livestock resources, the directorate offers the best means to breed and protect livestock from diseases and maladies. Proceeding on the basis of these tasks, the directorate has followed up on implementation of the plans for agricultural crops, plans for investment in livestock resources and plans for the governorate's other agricultural projects.

In Sphere of Loans

The volume of the loans advanced by al-Raqqah Agricultural Bank to the cooperative and private sectors amounts to nearly 31 million Syrian pounds, including 27.25 million pounds in seasonal short-term loans that are distributed as follows: 22,863,000 Syrian pounds for cotton, 2,601,000 pounds for millet, 951,000 pounds for grains, 150,000 pounds for fodder, 540,000 pounds for pesticides, and 144,000 Syrian pounds for plant covers [farshat]. This is in addition to 3,345,000 pounds in medium-range loans to farmers and peasants to purchase tractors and engines and 197,000 pounds in long-term loans for tree-planting projects.

Cotton Crop

The acreage cultivated with cotton by both the cooperative and private sectors this year amounts to 281,000 donums, of which 243,000 donums have been cultivated mechanically. The agricultural mechanization branch of al-Raqqah has planted 48,254 donums mechanically, thus reducing the costs and the amount of seed used and increasing production. The cultivated acreage is expected to yield 60,000-65,000 tons. We thus find that the production will drop below last year's level because this crop has been afflicted with the "narrow blaze."

Millet

Even though this crop was introduced into the governorate only last year and this year, the governorate has been able to cultivate all the targeted acreage, which amounts to 46,230 donums. The agricultural mechanization branch has cultivated nearly 2,500 donums of this acreage mechanically for both the cooperative and private sectors. According to the plans, the cultivated acreage is expected to produce 8,000-10,000 tons. However, numerous problems have plagued the crop, including the shortage of harvesters and dryers.

Sugar Beets

Nearly 90,000 tons of this crop have been delivered to al-Raqqah sugar plant this year from the total area cultivated with beets in the governorate. This area amounts to 45,130 donums, of which al-Raqqah agricultural mechanization branch cultivated 12,914 donums mechanically for both the (spring) and fall cycles.

Wheat and Barley

The governorate has produced this year more than 5,940,000 tons of wheat and 1,466,000 tons of barley. But this quantity is not up to what had been planned and expected because of the drought experienced by the country this year. The 1985 plan calls for the cultivation of 29,808 hectares of irrigated land, which are expected to yield no less than 106,000 tons of wheat, and for the cultivation of 79,778 hectares of dryfarm land, which are

expected to yield 71,800 tons. The plan also calls for cultivating 1,253 irrigated hectares with barley, which are expected to yield 25,060 tons of green fodder. It also calls for cultivating more than 202,000 hectares of dryfarm land, which are expected to yield no less than 120,612 tons.

Afforestation and Forests

Forest seedlings

The government nursery's production amounts this year to more than 124,000 seedlings of all kinds and these seedlings are ready to be distributed. The nursery's plan for next year calls for cultivating 400,000 seedlings of all kinds.

Production of Fruit Tree Seedlings

A total of 700,000 improved grapevine seedlings, 40,000 pomegranate seedlings and 15,000 fig seedlings have been produced. A total of 1 million grapevine (lattices) have also been produced.

Production of Grassland Seedlings

Grassland seedlings are produced by the grassland nursery in accordance with the plan set for the current year. A total of 1.2 million seedlings were planted in the 1984 season, thus actually producing 1,055,000 seedlings. These grassland seedlings have been planted in the semi-desert. The 1985 plan calls for the production of 1.5 million grassland seedlings.

Regarding Land Reclamation and Utilization of Newly Reclaimed Areas

A total of 20,000 hectares of land reclaimed on both banks of the Euphrates River have been recently introduced. This acreage is irrigated by the government irrigation project--the Kudayran pumping plants, al-Raqqah system and the Fi'lat system. It is greatly hoped that agriculture in this area will be modern and advanced. A total of 10,000 hectares have also been reclaimed in Bi'r al-Hashim area. This acreage will be put to actual use next year.

Regarding Directorate of Agriculture's Investment Plans

The monies spent during the Fifth 5-year Plan amount to nearly 45 million Syrian pounds. This sum has been spent on projects that bolster agriculture in this governorate, namely:

- Building 38 guidance units in the governorate's rural areas.
- Building veterinary centers for animal health, artificial insemination and sheep submersion.
- Building agricultural air strips and warehouses for pesticides and machinery.

- Developing the nurseries producing fruit tree seedlings in al-Qahtaniyah and opening centers for grafting grapevines.
- Building a nursery for grassland seedlings which are planted in the semi-desert.
- Drilling new wells in the semi-desert to serve livestock.
- Planting man-made forests in Abu Qubay' and Jisr Shaniyah.
- Purchasing numerous pieces of machinery, including tractors and drilling rigs.

Developing Agricultural Guidance

The Military Housing and Installation Organization recently built 13 guidance units at a cost of more than 3 million Syrian pounds in several of the governorate's villages. Thus, the total number of guidance units in the village has risen to 38 units.

Al-Raqqah Poultry Project

Al-Raqqah branch of the Military Housing Organization continues to build al-Raqqah poultry project. So far, 82 percent of the project's construction work has been completed. The project costs amount to nearly 27.5 million Syrian pounds. This project is being built to meet al-Raqqah Governorate's needs for eggs and chicken meat. It will have an annual capacity of 30 million eggs and 700,000 pullets. The Military Housing Organization started implementation of the project at the end of 1982 and it is expected to go into actual operation at the outset of 1985. This project is located in Abu Qubay' area at a distance of 18 km from the city of al-Raqqah.

The project calls for building 5 coops, each producing 140,000 chickens a year, and 3 coops for eggs, each with a capacity of producing 10 million eggs a year. The project also calls for building feed warehouses with a storage capacity of 1,800 cubic meters of feed, housing for the project technicians and workers, an administrative building, a water pumping and purification plant, fuel tanks, ground scales, emergency power generators and a network of local roads.

Agricultural Mechanization

Last year, the agricultural mechanization branch was able to implement the entire plan drawn up for it. In 1983, the branch was able to carry out production activities that exceeded the plan set for it by 200 percent. In 1984, some resources became available to the branch and it was able to implement the entire plan set for it by the General Directorate. All the branch worker earned the praise of the General Agricultural Mechanization Directorate for the efforts they exerted to implement the plan which included the deep ploughing of 30,000 donums, in addition to other

agricultural activities, such as softening the soil, breaking up clods, grading the earth, cultivating 12,914 donums of land with beet seeds mechanically for the spring and fall cycles, cultivating 48,254 donums of land with cotton seeds mechanically and cultivating 2,500 donums with millet seeds. The branch's plan for 1985 calls for softening, preparing and cultivating 100,000 donums of land.

Al-Rashid Organization

This organization is controlled by the Ministry of Agriculture. Last year, this organization implemented its entire plan well. Its plan for the current year calls for cultivating 2,000 hectares with barley, 2,000 hectares of dryfarm area with wheat, 400 irrigated hectares with highly productive wheat, 318 hectares with grassland, 70 hectares with cotton and 27 hectares with fruit trees.

Drop in Cotton Production

Damascus TISHRIN in Arabic 18 Dec 84 p 3

[Article by Khalil Iqtayni]

[Text] Even though cotton marketing [delivery] operations in al-Hasakah and Dayr al-Zawr Governorates began sometime ago, the harvesting and marketing operations are still going on. Moreover, harvesting has not yet started in some areas.

A few days ago, I visited the cotton fields located on al-Khabur River bank east of al-Hasakah. You cannot imagine how surprised my colleagues and I were when we found that a considerable number of fields have not been touched by the hands of the pickers yet. The white cotton was still in its bolls on the white branches which were turned by the rapidly advancing fall and winter into yellow sticks with a tinge of red. Watfah, a peasant woman from Radd Shaqra Cooperative, told us that the reason for the failure to harvest the crop was the unavailability of labor and that the heavy rains that have fallen prevented such a harvest.

In another field, 'Amshah, a peasant woman, told us that they had agreed with a number of female worker to begin the harvest but that the women stopped working 2 days after they started for no reason and that the rains then came to prevent them, meaning the family, from carrying on with the work by themselves.

A farmer working in another field told us that the heavy rains caused al-Khabur River to overflow its banks and to inundate all the fields up to the road. This is one of the factors that caused them to delay the harvest, another factor being the unavailability of labor.

A farmer we found working in a neighboring field said that despite the material inducements he had offered male and female workers, he could not reach agreement with anybody, adding that family and social problems have come to prevent women workers particularly from leaving their homes to

work. He noted that the delay they experienced in harvesting the crop has afflicted most of the area's farmers with a big material loss due to the drop in the quality of the crop as a result of the rains and flooding.

Other Factors

The statements of the brother farmers in this area--Radd Shaqra Cooperative--enabled us to understand the dimensions of the problem, not to say the tragedy, that has afflicted them as a result of the big loss they have suffered and of the waste of great efforts they exerted throughout an entire season.

Moreover, it seems that the problem has not been confined to this area only but rather has gone beyond to other areas and has occurred because of other factors. 'Abd-al-Masih Darwish, the head of the Cotton Agency of al-Hasakah Directorate of Agriculture, said that the "mechanized and conventional" cultivation of cotton has encountered a number of obstacles, including the fact that the weather conditions under which the planting was done were not suitable due to the lack of winter rainfall during the season. Consequently, the soil was not humid enough, thus making it difficult to plough and to break up the clods in the surface soil.

This is in addition to the formation of a solid and impervious layer over the seeds, especially in heavy soils, due to the increase in sodium carbonates during irrigation. There are other factors, such as the fact that a large number of seeds remained on top of the soil because of the presence of clods and of the inexperience of the tractor drivers and of the people supervising the seed-planting operation.

Together, these factors have had a negative impact on the growth and development of the crop. The poor weather conditions which prevailed in the governorate during the season were enough on their own to cause this decline. The cold spell which prevailed at the start of the agricultural operations afflicted the crop with (al-khinaq), which impeded the growth and development of the crop. Most of the cotton cultivated in the governorate has also been affected by lack of water as a result of the daily stoppage of the special pumps from evening till morning, thus stopping the flow of the river water to the lands of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate. Moreover, the depletion of a large number of artesian wells and the rise in the salinity of the remaining wells have had their impact on the drop in production and on the small yield.

We all know that most of the fields in al-Shadadi and Markadah areas were covered with dust, each day throughout the season. Moreover, the change in temperature between day and night impeded growth and caused the ripening of the bolls to be delayed, thus causing a delay of 20-25 days in harvesting the crop and, consequently, a drop of nearly 20 percent in the production in comparison with last year.

Efforts and Figures

Despite all these obstacles and difficulties, the authorities concerned have exerted obvious efforts to overcome them and to achieve the features set in the production plan.

Insofar as the guidance units are concerned, the Directorate of Agriculture has been able, according to the head of al-Hasakah Cotton Agency, to set up 30 guidance units supplied with the necessary technical elements and equipment. The agency has allotted for them areas of direct supervision in which to contact the brother farmers and to follow up on implementation of the plan according to modern agricultural methods. Regarding prevention, the directorate has been able to secure all the herbicides needed to eliminate harmful weeds and to supply the spraying and control equipment. A total area of 615 donums afflicted with magpie moths, 39,463 donums afflicted with cobwebs, 380 donums afflicted with (al-turays), 6,519 donums afflicted with wilt, 363,620 donums afflicted with seasonal harmful weeds, 50 donums afflicted with white bees, 85 donums afflicted with the green worm and 6,420 donums afflicted with (al-khinaq) have been treated.

Regarding agricultural mechanization, the targeted acreage, amounting to 60,000 donums, was cultivated in cooperation with the local branch of the Mechanized Agriculture Organization and the Mechanized Service Agency. The mechanical seeders given to the peasant cooperatives as incentive awards at the Aleppo Cotton Festival and the seeders belonging to the organization to cultivate the area were used. A total of 1,000 donums in the state farm in al-Manajir were also cultivated mechanically from seeding to harvest.

Results and Resolutions

The efforts exerted had to bear fruit. So what are the results achieved?

The figures available to us show that the acreage cultivated with this crop has increased. In 1974, the area cultivated with cotton amounted to 384,000 donums. In 1984, this acreage amounted to 464,000 donums. The increase in acreage is due to the increased drilling of artesian wells, to the construction of surface dams, to the efforts exerted by the technicians and to the farmer's awareness, his use of the modern farming and agricultural methods, especially his use of mechanized agriculture.

However, the production has not, as we have already noted, risen to the desired qualitative or quantitative level due to the reasons and factors we have already mentioned. This production amounts to nearly 125,000 tons, i.e., to one-third of the country's production, whereas it should have exceeded this figure by about 25 percent. But if the production figure is compared to the conditions and circumstances to which the season has been exposed, it would amount to a considerable accomplishment.

What is important is that harvest time has arrived and that the proper preparations are being made to organize the marketing operations successfully within the set schedules. At the meeting held by the branch

agricultural council on 30 September 1984, it was decided to open al-Hasakah ginning plant as of 3 October 1984 and to entrust the plant to collect the entire agricultural cotton crop from the areas of al-Hasakah, Tall Tamr and Ra's al-'Ayn, estimated at 19,000 tons, as well as 12,000 tons of industrial cotton. As for the industrial cotton produced in the areas of al-Shadadi and Markadah, it will be delivered to Dayr al-Zawr ginning plant at the rate of 200 tons a day. Any excess production will be delivered to the Aleppo ginning plant with the rest of the governorate's production.

It was also decided to entrust the public Cotton Ginning and Marketing Organizations to pay the financial loans to the farmers as of 3 October 1984 and to entrust the other agencies, the agricultural banks, the workers union and the transportation office to take all necessary steps to overcome the obstacles that the marketing operations may encounter.

At the meeting held by the council on 11 October 1984, the general conditions of the crop and the progress of the marketing operations were discussed again and it was found out that they were proceeding well and that the cotton quantities marketed by that date amounted to nearly 12,000 tons, compared to 22,000 tons in the preceding season. The quantities of cotton harvested by that date amounted to 23,000 tons, compared to 45,000 tons last year.

The minutes of the meeting point out that some acreage was affected by the cold, rains and flooding, especially in the areas of Tall Barak, al-Qamishli and al-Qahtaniyah. The acreage damaged amounted to nearly 4,500 donums.

The council also discussed the causes leading to the drop in production this season, which are the same causes noted in a previous paragraph.

Marketing

Now we can wonder how the cotton crop marketing operations have been progressing in the governorate. What we have already noted are resolutions adopted according to certain views and concepts. Here, we must find out the reality.

Comrade Muhammad al-'Idan, the deputy chairman of the governorate's farmers union, has said that they [union] issued instructions to the cooperatives and associations under the union's control on cotton marketing. The union has also dispatched agricultural engineers to issue source-of-origin certificates and to supply the union with weekly reports on the progress of the marketing operations and on the quantities shipped and marketed.

Al-'Idan also said that the brother farmers have been suffering with the marketing operations as a result of illogical practices by some people. The most significant such practices are the failure of porters and drivers to abide by the set price and their greedy utilization of the farmer.

He noted that the harvesting and marketing operations are proceeding well and that the delay which occurred has been due to external circumstances and to weather conditions, such as rain, dust and climatic changes.

At al-Minshari ginning plant in al-Hasakah, we noticed that the marketing operations have been proceeding precisely and according to a certain system that is likely to reduce errors, to do the farmer justice in terms of price and to speed up the performance of work.

'Abd-al-Jawad Jabin, the ginning plant director, told us that the plant's theoretical capacity is 650 tons a day whereas the quantities delivered to it daily exceed this figure greatly, amounting to nearly 900 tons.

Jabin also said that certain measures have been taken to facilitate the process of delivering cotton to the ginning plant, beginning with the moment the truck enters the plant and with the weighing and sorting operations and ending with the money transfers which take no more than 3 days to deliver.

Al-Hasakah ginning plant is engaged in the distinguished experiment of mechanical loading and unloading which has solved many of the problems encountered in previous seasons, in addition to saving the state nearly 750,000 Syrian pounds and saving time and effort and to the speedy performance of work.

Jabin added: "If any farmer feels that he is done an injustice in the grading and pricing of his crop, we welcome his complaint and a committee is formed immediately to re-grade and re-price his crop so that he may achieve his right. So far, no farmer has come to us in this regard."

Different Picture

In Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, the general features of the picture have been different. The acreage cultivated is much smaller than the acreage in al-Hasakah Governorate and the experts consider what is cultivated of a lesser quality for reasons we will explain afterwards. Moreover, the dimensions of the problem seem to be bigger, thus making the measures taken necessarily bigger.

The first of these measures was taken on 14 March 1984 when an administrative order was issued by the governorate's directorate of agriculture calling for the formulation of guidance units and for surveying and treating the cotton crop and the other summer crops included in the 1983-84 agricultural intensification plan for the areas of al-Tibni, Kharitah, Muhassan, Basirah, Sur, Murat, Muhamidiyah, al-Kasrah, Mayadin, Dhuwayyan, al-Karamah, al-'Asharah, al-Maslakhah, Abukamal, al-Susah and the mobile movie unit [as published].

Paragraph 10 of the administrative order states that "the agricultural technician in the village entrusted to him and the guidance unit in the villages under its jurisdiction shall be directly responsible for the cotton crop from the moment of seeding until harvest time and shall submit weekly reports on this crop and on the developments occurring in it."

Paragraph 15 of this order sets 30 April as the latest date for the cultivation of cotton in areas infested with insets and 25 April 1984 as the latest date for financing by the agricultural banks. There are 41 such areas whose names we have.

The documents at our disposal say that these guidance units have carried out a number of operations and activities. In April, a total of 45 seminars, 15 field days and 638 visits were conducted. In May, a total of 41 seminars, 17 field days and 689 visits were conducted. In June, a total of 5 seminars, 8 field days and 841 visits were conducted.

Compulsory Control

However, it seems that the problem was bigger than all this, thus necessitating bigger and firmer measures. On 2 April 1984, the governor of Dayr al-Zawr issued Decree No 15/N. We present in the following some of the articles in this decree:

Article 1. All irrigated lands cultivated with cotton in Dayr al-Zawr Governorate shall be considered lands subject to compulsory pest control.

Article 2. In case neither the governorate's cooperative associations nor the cotton farmers, be they natural or legal-status persons, carry out the pest control operation at the request of the head of the agricultural unit concerned, the unit head may carry out the control operations at the expense of the cooperative or the farmer.

Article 4. The cooperative agricultural bank shall finance the compulsory pest control operations by supplying the materials and paying the workers' wages and other expenses in cash.

In enactment of this decree, a total of 50,000 donums afflicted with magpie moths and blossom killers were treated. Spraying planes treated half the area and the other half was treated on the ground because of the inability of aircraft to spray it due to the presence of powerlines and to scattered plots next to the farmers' houses.

On 24 May 1984, the Directorate of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform sent Report No 3757/M to the Aleppo Cotton Bureau on the condition of the crop until Wednesday, 23 May 1984. The report contained a number of observations, the most important of which are:

The condition of cotton is constantly being upgraded as a result of the rise in temperatures. The crop has grown in all the fields, even in re-seeded fields.

The areas cultivated with seeds amount to 60,289 donums. Thus, the predetermined plan has been fully implemented in this regard.

Service activities have started.

(Al-khinaq) disease has still spread in the governorate's fields but has not had any [negative] impact as a result of the rise in temperatures and the growth of the crop.

The season started nearly 1 month later than usual because of the low temperatures in the second half of April, of the spread of (al-khinaq) and of the failure of some fields whose owners have had to re-seed them.

Harsh Climatic Conditions

During the season, the crop has been exposed to some factors that have had a negative impact on its growth. The most significant of these factors are unprecedented harsh climatic conditions, according to Engineer Najm-al-Din al-Ruwayli, the head of the Cotton Agency. These conditions are embodied in:

The drop in temperature to 0 degrees centigrade during the second half of April, thus preventing some of the cultivated cotton seeds from growing and afflicting another part with (al-khinaq). A total of 37,000 donums have been re-seeded. This area was supposed to yield an early crop but will now yield its crop late.

The dust storms that afflicted the governorate for 2 months during the summer season have caused the blossoms to drop and weakened the plants.

The cold waves in October hit 50,000 donums cultivated with a late crop.

Finally, the rains and floods came to play their part in damaging some areas cultivated with cotton, according to Letter No 8443/M, dated 10 November 1984, by the Directorate of Agriculture. The letter defines the damaged areas as follows: 300 donums in al-Bukamal area, 1,475 donums in the Hajin area, 2,000 donums in al-Sahiliyah, al-Qat'ah and al-Bukamal area, 500 donums in al-Susah and al-Saghur area and 50 donums in the Baqras Tahtani area. This brings the total up to 4,325 donums. The report stresses that most of these areas have not yet undergone the first harvest.

Together, these causes and factors have led to a drop in the production of 20 percent below what had been decided. In addition to these factors, there has been another important element, namely, the drop in al-Khabur River water—a drop which has had a clear impact on the decline in the production of the fields located on both banks of the river.

The cotton production of Dayr al-Zawr Governorate is estimated this year at 50,000 tons from an area of 245,000 donums whereas last year's production from the same area amounted to 69,100 tons, with a donum producing 280.8 kg.

Nine Marketing Centers

Nine centers have been set up for the marketing of these 50,000 tons, according to Engineer al-Ruwayli. Each center has two elements from the Directorate of agriculture and one element from the Seed Production Organization. The directorate elements have the task of marketing industrial cotton and the organization element has the task of marketing the agricultural cotton in each center from 7:00 am until 7:00 pm.

Before entering the ginning plan, our attention was drawn by the bales stacked up in an open area across the plant--a fact which aroused a number of important questions in our mind, perhaps the most important being the question of how these bales were to be protected from numerous elements, especially natural elements about whose negative impact we have often heard the people concerned talk, particularly at this time. Dawud Jum'ah, the ginning plant manager, told us that they are giving this issue serious consideration and that there is a tendency to want to move the gin to a more spacious site near the factory complex outside the city. He told us that the marketing activities started on 22 September 1984 and that they are still going on. In addition to the governorate's cotton, the gin also collects part of al-Hasakah Governorate cotton production. As for the quality of Dayr al-Zawr cotton, he said: "It is very poor. It is very humid and of the short-staple variety."

Sights and Conversations

After this tour amidst the measures, decisions and figures, we decided to tour some of the nearby fields to hear what the farmer, who is the owner, has to say about this crop. What did we see first and what did we hear then?

One the way to al-Husayniyah village, north of Dayr al-Zawr, the most surprising things were the bales of cotton stacked in front of houses. What surprised us was the information which we had and which emphasized the the farmers of this village had completed their harvest a long time before. So why had they not delivered their cotton by then?

On the way, we met Hasan Muhammad al-Jasim, a member of the executive council of the village cooperative, riding his motorcycle and heading for the city. After talking to him, he accompanied us on our tour and we learned from him that the main reason for the farmers' delay in delivering their crop was the debts owed by the cooperative to the agricultural bank--debts which were automatically deducted from the price of the cotton delivered. Al-Jasim said: "Our cooperative includes nearly 100 farmers and owes 180,000 pounds to the cooperative/agricultural bank because of the negligence of some farmers and of their coupling of farming with other businesses."

He stressed that a number of farmers have been in debt from the time the cooperative was founded and until the present and that, on the other hand, there are other farmers who run their businesses profitably. Al-Jasim was

not reluctant to criticize the manner in which the cooperative chairman deals with the farmers and his dealing with them softly on issues that affect the development and survival of the cooperative.

Farmer Khalifah al-Salim al-'Allush said that he planted 16 donums, which have produced 1.3 tons, and that he is not satisfied with this low production. He pointed out that the reason for this low production is the fact that his field was hit by the "narrow blaze" and he asserted that most of the cooperative's farmers are annoyed with the accountant who is always late in paying the bills, as he put it.

We then asked for the cooperative chairman but his son, 'Abdallah Khalluf, told us that his father was in the city, that they own 20 donums, which have produced 2 tons, and that they did not deliver the crop "due to special circumstances."

In the village of Safirah Fawqani, Mahmud al-Hamad, a member of the cooperative's executive council, told us that their cooperative includes 125 members, most of whom have completed the harvest and the delivery. If some have not done so, it is because of the shortage of labor. He noted that their cooperative makes good profits, and that their production this year has been good, despite all the obstacles, and that the 9 donums he owns produced 1.72 tons. He, along with the other farmers who took part in the conversation, asserted that the price paid for their crop is small and incompatible with the financial and material efforts exerted during the season.

8494

CSO: 4404/163

AFGHANISTAN

RESISTANCE'S ISOLATION EXAMINED VIS-A-VIS SOVIET 'COLONIALISM'

Paris GEOPOLITIQUE in French Winter 1984-1985 pp 75-76

[Article by Armand de Villoutreys: "Payoff for Forgetfulness"]

[Text] "Even though war is an act of strength,
calculation must perforce play its role in it."
Clausewitz.

As the Afghans, last 27 December, entered the 6th year of their struggle against the Soviets, we had, perforce, to bow to the evidence: the resistance still stands fast against the mightiest army in the world. The Cassandras who gave the peasants a month or so to surrender proved to be far wide of the mark.

In those days, we could still believe that the free world would at last find its moral strength to rally to the support of a legitimate national liberation movement which, for once, displayed no taint of totalitarianism or Marxism, and, above all, one that enjoyed enormous popular support.

Bitter disappointment: after 5 years, the Afghan resistance still fights on alone, in a war where only the capture of a correspondent or a doctor emerges from the cloud of unknowingness... Afghanistan is merely another line in the debit column of profit and loss to be charged to detente.

Genesis of a War

You have to go back to the early years of the fifties to find the roots of what is happening today in Afghanistan. In those days there was an upsurge of a Marxist movement backed, as usual, by the USSR, which would lead, in 1965, to the birth of the Afghan Communist Party. Cannily oiled, with very generous economic agreements, the influence of the USSR grew in Afghanistan; what made it all the easier was the fact that the United States chose to side with Pakistan in the border quarrels that regularly shake both countries over the issue of Pushtun tribal independence.

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With the access to power of Daoud, a.k.a. "the Red Prince," the communists set about infiltrating the government apparatus. By the time Daoud awoke to his mistake and tried to shift into reverse, it was too late: on 27 April 1978, a communist conspiracy brought him down.

The coup d'etat certainly came early for the usual revolutionary scenario: the ranks of the PPDA (Communist Party of Afghanistan) were thin and anemic, made up of intellectual dogmatists who coupled a total ignorance of reality with an extravagant admiration for the Soviet development model. The seeds of revolt sprouted early as the new rulers touched off a cultural revolt as clumsy as it was violent. De-Islamization, central-government meddling in local administrations, Marxist courses in the schools, headlong industrialization, establishment of labor unions and coops...

Before long, President Taraki had to enforce these universally unpopular reforms in a country still ambling along at the leisurely pace of camel caravans, and clinging to ancestral customs deeply imbued with Islam. The rebellion spread, and was met with savage repression. That was the start of this long war...

Soviet Motivation and Strategy

Once the Soviets noticed the fragility of the communist regime, they made haste to straighten it out. Atop their agenda was a concern with propping up a regime favorable to them, but threatened by rising revolt, and that was what drove them to invade Afghanistan on 27 December 1979. At stake was their ability to prove that communism would work in this country. It was unthinkable for them to contemplate the failure of a socialist experiment on their very doorstep...not to mention the potential repercussions in the Muslim republics in the southern USSR. "War has never been anything but a more energetic effort to express political thinking," said Clausewitz. There would also be references to "fear of encirclement," the long-standing justification for Soviet expansionist dreams.

Does anyone still question the strategic stakes in this war? To lay hands on this country is to revive the old czarist dream of world domination; it is a giant stride southward, to the warm seas; it is building a solid bastion in a troubled region.

No two ways about it: this must be viewed as a major stage in the Soviet Union's territorial expansion. The West's casual reaction clearly demonstrates our woeful underestimation of what is truly at stake in this conflict.

In choosing their strategy, the masters of the Kremlin took two prime factors into their reckoning: the mountainous terrain of the country and the immediate proximity of Soviet bases. The

first of these two factors makes any swift and efficacious pacification a very difficult task, since the guerrilla fighters can readily find refuge in the mountains. The second factor makes it feasible to fight a long war without having to ante up a heavy logistical tab. The USSR is fighting "on its own stair-landing," so to speak. That explains the low combat profile the Kremlin's tacticians have opted for here. With 100,000 men when the invasion started, and with 150,000 today, the Soviets hold the nation's infrastructure: the cities, the main roads. It was of no concern to them, at the outset, that the Afghan resistance controls the loyalty of the country's remaining 80 percent of population. It would have been easy -- but oh! how inelegant! -- to triple their troop strength in an attempt to comb out the countryside. In the event, they chose the long term, the path of slow assimilation, the gradual wearing down of resistance, the wooing of population groups sick to death of war or the departure of the others, utilized all the techniques of psychological warfare -- terror, espionage, disinformation, propaganda, thought-conditioning; in all of that they have long experience and training to draw on.

Organization of the Resistance

The Kremlin's strategists had not anticipated the incredible pugnacity of the resistance. It swiftly assimilated the principles of guerrilla warfare, and used them for relentless harassment of the Soviet forces or the Afghan regular army. With support from China, Egypt and other Arab countries, the Mujahidin, these fighters for the faith managed to procure arms which, added to those taken from the Afghan army, enable them to fight on with increasing efficacy. Of course, they are cruelly short of heavy weapons, particularly antiaircraft artillery, to threaten the Soviets' overwhelming air superiority. How can they fight MiGs or Mi 24 armored helicopters with only their wretched Kalashnikovs?

This resistance movement has managed to organize, with the almost total support of the local populace, but it is still hampered by intramural divisions. There are regions like Maj Mas'ud's Pan-shir or Mohammed Amin Wardak's Wardak that have achieved a fine new-style organization; what is missing, though, is national support, nation-wide unity of action. The resistance embraces six political parties divided into two alliances (the moderates and the fundamentalists) which have never been able to get together. Internal dissension, quarrels among chiefs, and the political organization of the resistance movement reflect the lack of any common political plan and an incapacity to fight side by side. Come the day when a great leader can rally unanimity around himself, a giant step forward will have been taken.

Why They Bogged Down

"We will drive the Soviets out, even if it takes us 200 years!" Maj Amin Wardak told me one day. This indomitable determination, this faith in overwhelming victory, is what still keeps the Soviet army in check.

Even so, this spring will have brought an incredible hardening in the Soviet military effort. The "Chernenko style" is more reliant on brute force than the Andropov style, which leaned on subterfuge and subversion. Three offensives, one against Herat, one against Qandahar, and one in the Panjshir Valley, that insolent valley, the symbolic stronghold of the resistance, backed by massive TV-16 bombers flying at high altitude, the use of helicopter-borne commandos with special combat skills -- all this is indicative of the determination to speed up the process.

Faithful to the rules of guerrilla warfare, the guerrilla warriors have bowed to superior force and retreated into their "marquaz," hidden camps built deep in the mountains. They evade any head-on confrontation with the enemy, then harass him according to a strategy that has proved successful once again. These past few weeks, several communiques have reported that the resistance forces had downed enemy helicopters with missiles. If that turns out to be true, it would mean still another threat to the Soviets.

At present, it looks as though neither side is in any position to win the day. The Soviet contingent is inadequate and the Mujahidin lack the heavy weapons they would need to chalk up decisive victories. This stalemate may very well last indefinitely. Even so, there is a threat hanging over the resistance: it may well suffer from slow erosion of strength if the Soviets manage to cut off their supply lines from Pakistan.

The West: Indifference or Error?

By committing itself directly, without any screen of Cubans or Angolans from outside the sphere of influence it inherited from Yalta, the USSR is betting heavily on the lack of any reaction from the West. This time, it has won its bluff... Who cares any more these days what happens to these distant -- and Islamic, to boot -- nations? The outcome of these tergiversations makes the Afghan war a particularly singular conflict in what is a recent history egregiously rich in just in this sort of thing: it is neither an East-West conflict nor yet an anti-colonial war. Quite the contrary, it is an attempt at colonization, at "Mongolization" in a country that once was free and non-aligned.

Five Years of Woe and of Hope

"We shall not leave more than a million Afghans alive, which will be quite enough to build socialism!" That dreadful utterance from

the lips of Babrak Karmal draws us into the core of the daily horror in Afghanistan. Five years of war, of offensives, of bombardment, of massacres; 5 years of privation, of exodus to Pakistan, of survival; 5 years of woe, but also of hope, of passion and of unshakable belief in the final victory: the victory of horror or of freedom.

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CS0:4619/27

AFGHANISTAN

CITIZEN PRAISES WOMEN'S ROLE IN DRA

Kabul DEHQAN in Dari 17 Dec 84 pp 6-7

[Text] In a conversation with the correspondent of DEHQAN, Sediqeh, a woman worker of the housing construction plant who has lost her home as a result of pillage and plunder by wicked people, had this story to tell: I left my life of 40 years with bitter memories. What is left of my life is a daughter and a son. This bitter experience ended with the victory of the Sawr Revolution in that my husband, as a result of democratic land reforms, became owner of the land he had worked on before. Not long after more tragedy hit me and my family. Highway robbers and murderers told my husband not to work on the land and eventually these thieves and traitors came to our house one night and took my husband away. They were truly un-Islamic. The next day I found in the village the body of my husband who had been martyred in order to provide his children with a piece of bread.

Sediqeh sighed with tears in her eyes and went on to say: These are the doings of the wicked infidels who plundered my possessions and goods, murdered my husband and left my children without a protector. How can a worker of the country not be grateful to our protector. How can a worker of the country not be grateful to our revolutionary government? Even though we were forced from the farm, we have been provided the makings of a good life in the factory.

Sediqeh, who was in a primary literacy class and was enthusiastically reading and writing, added: What has given me the desire for learning to read and write at this grey-hair age is that I will better be able to understand the humanitarian goals of my government, to better know the friends and foes of the revolution and the people and to bear arms with awareness in the defense of the fruits of the revolution.

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AFGHANISTAN

LITERACY COURSES TO CREATE 'NEW' LIFE FOR WOMEN

Kabul DEHQAN in Dari 17 Dec 84 pp 6,

[Text] The 10th Precinct Women's Council of Kabul City has been able, during the past 5 years of its organized operations, to enroll in 39 preliminary organizations 1855 women, 510 of them members of the PDPA--peasants, housewives, government office workers, teachers, students, doctors, nurses and household servants. Of these organization, 4 in residential sectors, 18 are in administrative units, 11 are in educational institutions and 2 are in manufacturing institutions.

A source at the 10th Precinct Women's Council of Kabul City stated the following during a conversation with the correspondent of DEHQAN: One of the basic considerations of this council is the expansion of the network of the starting organizations that would enable working women of the precinct to benefit from literacy, to take part in social and economic activities and to become familiar with the goals of the party and the revolution.

In the past 6 months, 600 new members have joined the precinct organizations and 6 new starting organizations were formed.

The work of attracting, including and enrolling women in the starting organizations is proceeding well but alongside the expansion of these preliminary groups we need to play leadership and organizational roles. For this reason in 1363 [21 March 1984-21 March 1985] 7 training seminars were set up for cadres and activists, of whom 63 were referred to the Women's Faculty of PDPA's Institute of Social Sciences. In order to raise the level of awareness of specially cadres and activists of the precinct, courses have been set up on the articles of organization of the Democratic Women's Organization and the orientation is proceeding now at the level of starting organizations.

The source added: On the 10th Precinct level of Kabul City, members of organizations have taken part in search efforts and some have taken part in operations. Comrade Belqis, secretary of the women's 400-bed [hospital], Afghani, member of the 400-bed Parwin [hospital], and Zeynab Gharwal, head mistress of the Microrayon nursery schools, have done much in the revolutionary corps work of Panjsher Valley in political and grassroots work, medical treatment of those in need and in propagating the policies of the party and the DRA government.

Six hundred women are participating in 38 literacy classes set up in the 10th Precinct.

In this same year voluntary collective work assignments have been performed more than 17 times including the cleaning of clinics and children's rooms and helping the sick and the needy. The sick have been treated free of charge and the families of martyrs were visited 210 times and help given them in various ways. But these visits are not enough as expressions of sympathy because it is appropriate for us to show more and better understanding and sympathy for the relatives of those who lost their dear lives and have us in their debt.

Mothers who work in plants as well as administrative, training and educational institutions in the 10th Precinct need help in resolving their problems in their places of work and in the care of their children. To resolve their problems 10 children's rooms and 12 rooms where women can exchange viewpoints have been opened. In the first 6 months of 1363 [21 March 1984-22 September 1984] 23 women have referred to the precinct and other preliminary organizations for solutions to their problems which were attended to.

In the same period 37 jobless women were referred to various institutions for employment.

The referral of orphans to the Watan Orphanage in order to provide them with proper training is another of the constant jobs performed by this council. In the first 6 months of the year 14 children were placed in the Watan Orphanage.

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CSO: 4665/13

BANGLADESH

ERSHAD SPEAKS AT SCIENCE AWARD CEREMONY

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 7 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Text] President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt Gen H.M. Ershad said on Sunday that the scientific advancements should be used for peace, progress and welfare of mankind by emancipating the humanity from hunger, poverty and diseases, reports BSS.

The President said all efforts and research in scientific pursuit should be directed towards achieving welfare of the people and improving the quality of life of the future generations.

He was speaking at the Academy gold medal award ceremony of Bangladesh Academy of Sciences at the Bangladesh Agricultural Research Council auditorium in Dhaka.

The function was attended, among others, by Ministers and scientists and was also addressed by Prof M.O. Ghani and Dr Kazi M. Badruddoza, Secretary of the academy.

President Ershad said the victorious forward march of science had been gaining momentum in today's world and the human society was being enriched by newer scientific inventions and discoveries. "We have to ascertain our position correctly in the context of overall scientific development in the world," he said, adding "at the same time, the successful scientists have to play due role for narrowing down the gap with the advanced countries."

He said like many other Third World countries, Bangladesh was also a victim of brain-drain. He congratulated the five scientists, including two women scientists, who received Academy Gold Medal for excellence in research and said he was impressed by their patriotism and eagerness for national development in the face of enticements from the developed countries.

The President said two women recipients of the award also proved that the country's womenfolk were becoming successful in facing professional challenges side by side with their male counterparts. This will act as a source of inspiration to all women, he observed.

President Ershad said the development of a country depended on proper utilisation of its resources, skilled manpower and harnessing of the possibilities. A far-reaching planning is needed for the purpose, he said.

He regretted that despite formation of a National Council on Science and Technology in 1975, it could not determine the national science and technology policy till 1982. After that, a high-level national committee on the subject was constituted in 1983 and as per the recommendations of that committee, a national science and technology policy and programme would be included in the Third Five-Year Plan. Over and above, arrangements would be made for increased allocation in science and technology sector in the next plan strategy, he added.

New Bangladesh

The President said today the nation was engaged in the pursuit of building a happy and prosperous new Bangladesh. We have to make sacrifices and accept hardship for brighter days ahead he said, adding the independence that we achieved at the cost of lakhs of lives, has to be made meaningful to all.

He said through the advancement in science, development of appropriate technology suiting the country's need and building up of infrastructural facilities, the pace of economic progress could be accelerated. The progress of the country, improvement of the quality of life of the people, attainment of food autarky and achievement of economic emancipation--all these depended on the appropriate development and utilisation of science and technology, he added.

President Ershad said total dependence on imported technology and indiscriminate acceptance of foreign technology did not always serve national interest. We have to determine which technology is beneficial or effective for us, he said, adding: the country's scientists could play a complementary role in this regard.

Glorious Days of Islam

He said it was needless to speak about the role of science in the advancement of a country which was evident in the progress of the western world. The practice of knowledge and science was emphasised in the Islamic code of life and the past glorious days of Islam bore the testimony to this scientific progress.

He said, side by side with Government's efforts for the development of science, non-government initiatives should come forward to supplement it.

The President referred to the observance of science week all over the country every year to help flourish young talents and said similarly initiatives should be directed to make the education system science-oriented.

Earlier, the President distributed Academy Award of Gold Medals to Professor Kamaluddin Ahmed and Professor Hironmoy Sen Gupta, the Senior Group Academy Gold Medal to Professor Mohammad Shamsheer Ali and Dr Flora Zabun Majid and the Junior Group Academy Gold Medal to Dr Khurshid Jahan.

CSO: 4600/1263

BANGLADESH

FOREIGN AFFAIRS MINISTER TALKS TO PRESS

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 2 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Text] Foreign Affairs Adviser Humayun Rasheed Choudhury yesterday emphatically said that there has been 'no shift' in the country's foreign policy over the years.

He said Bangladesh has been consistently following the same policy as regards her relations with other countries for maintaining peace and harmony.

Addressing a press conference at the Foreign Ministry on the New Year's Day, the adviser described Bangladesh's role in different international fora including the United Nations and the OIC.

He happily noted that Bangladesh's role was being lauded abroad for its firm and consistent stand on different international issues. In this regard he mentioned the activities in the recently concluded UN General Assembly and the Islamic Foreign Ministers' Conference in Sanaa and said both the occasions provided Bangladesh with the opportunity of strengthening its ties with the other nations.

Mr Choudhury said that the member-countries in the UN appeared well disposed of and forthcoming in their support for Bangladesh's candidature for the 41st UN General Assembly presidency in 1986. He said that the Pakistan candidate Mr Sharifuddin Pirzada became the OIC Secretary General following the consensus among the member-nations and added Bangladesh by withdrawing her candidature upheld the spirit.

Asked about too much optimism as was expressed at high government levels earlier concerning the OIC's chief executive post, the adviser reserved his comment. He, however, hastened to add it did not tarnish the country's image and on the contrary, our effort for the consensus was lauded and reflected at the conference.

Replying to a question on categorization of friendly countries, the adviser said: "we seek friendship with all countries."

Asked about the problems in projecting the image of a country having military government, he said it did not make any difference as there were other countries having military regimes in power.

He told a questioner that he had raised the issue of the stranded Pakistanis to serve a humanitarian cause asking for an early repatriation of the few hundred thousand Pakistani nationals from Bangladesh. "They have their hearts and minds set on their homeland, Pakistan and they want to go back home and their presence on the soil of Bangladesh is only physical," Mr Choudhury said.

Replying to a question on resolving the burning bilateral issues with neighbouring India after the general elections there, Mr Choudhury said that talks were on for the solution of the outstanding disputes.

Asked about the Farakka issue with the lean season causing serious adverse effect on Bangladesh, the adviser said the issue would be taken up at the appropriate level. But, he added, a meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission was due shortly on the water sharing issue.

On the prospect of holding Islamic Peace Mission meeting on Iran-Iraq war in Dhaka, he said it depended on the President of Gambia. He described as a positive development in the efforts for ending the prolonged fratricidal war when both Iran and Iraq attended the Saana meeting.

On Afghanistan, he said at the recently concluded Saana meeting we called for immediate withdrawal of Soviet troops from there.

Marking the 10th anniversary of Bangladesh's entry into the United Nations the foreign ministry has brought out a brochure containing the speeches delivered by Bangladesh leaders at the UN. The new brochure, unlike the previous one includes the photos and speeches of the former presidents-- Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Ziaur Rahman and former foreign ministers Dr Kamal Hussain and Prof Mohammad Shamsul Huq.

CSO: 4600/1258

BANGLADESH

GOVERNMENT PRESS NOTE ON ELECTION SCHEDULE

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 2 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] The Government on Tuesday categorically declared that the election schedule for the office of President would be announced after the first session of Parliament, reports BSS.

Referring to the President's commitment made in his address to the nation on the eve of 'Victory Day' (Dec 15) the Government, in a Press Note, announced some other measures to ensure its 'neutrality' for free and fair elections and expressed the sincere hope that different political parties and alliances would announce their decisions immediately relating to the elections.

The Press Note stressed it was 'essential to hold the elections in a peaceful atmosphere.' As such, the Press Note said all the necessary measures would be taken so that the Election Commission could hold the polls keeping itself 'free from all sorts of influence or malice.'

The Government also assured that a Gazette containing the results of the parliamentary elections would be published within ten days of the polls.

The Press Note said: 'The Government is strongly determined to establish democracy in the country by holding a free and neutral election as early as possible. This desire has been clearly stated in the address to the nation by the President on the eve of Victory Day on December 15. After this, some political parties and alliances raised a few questions. So, the Government is taking the following measures with the hope that all political parties and alliances will come forward to participate in the elections.

'The President and Chief Martial Law Administrator strongly feels that the impartiality of his Government on all affairs regarding elections is beyond question. The Government is firm to show equal treatment to all parties.

'The President and Chief Martial Law Administrator said it time and again that the administration will also observe complete neutrality in this connection.

'Meanwhile, he declared that there will be no member of any political party in his cabinet after the announcement of the election schedules by the Election Commission.

"It may be mentioned, the President in his December 15 speech categorically said that election to a sovereign Parliament would be held first before all other elections including that of the President on the basis of the suspended Constitution.

"In the light of above announcement, the Government gives the explanation that the schedule of the presidential election will be given after the first session of Parliament.

Fundamental rights to be restored

"Reiterating the announcement of December 15, the Government has been declaring that all fundamental rights and writ jurisdiction will be restored and the Martial Law will be withdrawn except some of its relevant portion which will be essentially required to maintain a cover of Martial Law with a view to avoiding political vacuum.

"The issues relating to arrest, detention, trial punishment, amnesty, etc. will be disposed on the basis of existing laws. It is needless to say that the holding of the election in a peaceful atmosphere is a must. All steps will be taken so that the Election Commission can conduct the polls devoid of any influence and malice. The Government is giving assurance that the Gazette relating to the election results would be published within ten days of the polls.

"In the light of above measures, the Government hopes that all confusions will go and all parties and alliances will come forward to participate in the elections for immediate withdrawal of Martial Law and transition to democracy.

"In this connection, the Government likes to mention that in the recent past the Government and the Election Commission had declared election schedules and postponed them for reasons to reach greater understanding.

Everybody will certainly admit it that repetition of this must not be desirable and that it will undermine the image of the nation in the world. The Government sincerely hopes that different political parties and its appliances will announce immediately their decisions regarding elections so that the Election Commission having sure about the election can announce the election schedules and the Government can take all steps and preparations for holding the election fair, free and neutral.

CSO: 4600/1257

BANGLADESH

GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO EASE FOREIGN LOAN REPAYMENTS

Press Note on Provisions

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 25 Dec 84 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Government on Monday directed all development financing institutions to follow a new system of accounting whereby foreign currency loans will be converted into local currency at the rate existing on the date of payment and interest charged on them at rates applicable to local currency loans on such date.

In a Press Note issued by the Ministry of Finance, the Government announced a package of modifications to the existing Exchange rate Fluctuations Absorption Scheme (EFAS), 1983, with a view to what it called "providing sponsors of industrial projects substantial benefits and concession." The decision is sequel to the vexing problem of an ever-diminishing value of the taka in the international market and the sub-borrowers' demand to find a way out of the ever-growing burden of the loan, it is assumed.

In another modification the Government also decided to convert foreign currency loans into taka from the date on which the donor countries had converted such loans into grants.

Another salient feature of the modifications to the EFAS, 1983, as announced on Monday was the decision to remit 10 percent of the excess exchange burden for all borrowers who would exercise option under the modified scheme.

The benefit of the modified scheme will be available for all foreign currency loans disbursed prior to July 1, 1984. The Government has also extended date for exercising option for the different parts of the scheme up to January 31, 1985 and February 29, 1985.

One of the aims of the modified scheme was to "facilitate recycling of blocked resources." The Government also urged borrowers to take advantage of the scheme and start clearing the overdues to the financial institutions.

The following is the text of the Press Note:

With a view to providing further relief to the projects and companies financed by different financing institutions adversely affected by the depreciation in the value of taka over the last few years, the Government has since reviewed the provisions of the Exchange Fluctuations Absorption Scheme (EFAS), 1983.

A major aspect of the Government's economic policy is to provide greater opportunities to the private sector for all types of economic activities, particularly in the industrial sector. Government have noticed with concern that accumulated overdues have eroded the capacity of the financing institutions for helping new projects and entrepreneurs according to the objectives of the New Industrial Policy. A large number of the new projects approved by BSB, BSRS, ICB etc are starving for financing which now the financing institutions are not in a position to meet due to non-payment of their dues by a large number of defaulting borrowers. At the same time, due to the weakened financing position of these institutions resulting from such non-payment, it has become difficult for the Government to arrange foreign exchange resources and credit lines for the BSB and BSRS for financing new projects. In fact, poor recovery of overdues by these institutions have prompted some major donors to freeze available foreign exchange credit lines until the repayment and recovery position improve.

Taking into account the implications of changing exchange rate of taka, the Government introduced the Exchange Fluctuation Absorption Scheme in August 1983 to help reduce the burden on account of exchange rate fluctuations. A number of borrowers opted for this new scheme both under the BSB and BSRS, but many borrowers continued to default in their repayment, thus aggravating further the financial position of these institutions. Government policy is to ensure recycling of the blocked resources in order to fulfil the objectives of the New Industrial Policy. In order to facilitate recycling of blocked resources, it has been decided by the Government to provide additional facilities and opportunities to the borrowers for resuming repayment of their overdues by some modifications of the Exchange Fluctuation Absorption Scheme.

The major features of the modified scheme which will be applicable to past foreign currency loan are (a) the excess burden on account of exchange rate fluctuation will be determined in a straightforward manner as the difference between the taka liability on the due date/dates of repayment and the taka currency liability on the date/dates of corresponding disbursements of foreign currency loans; (b) all financing institutions have been directed to follow an identical system of accounting whereby foreign currency loans will be converted if not cleared in time into local currency loans at the rate of exchange that prevailed on the due date of payment and interest will be charged at rates applicable to local currency loans on such date or as might have been determined by the Government/Bangladesh Bank from time to time; (c) for foreign loans which have been converted into grants by some donors, the outstanding and overdues portions of such foreign currency loans will be converted into taka loans on the date such conversion was made

and interest applicable on local currency loans on that date will be charged from such dates and (d) to provide incentive to the borrowers to clear their overdues it has been decided to remit 10 percent of the excess exchange burden as defined above for all borrowers who have or will exercise option under the scheme.

The benefit of the modified scheme will be available for all foreign currency loans disbursed prior to July 1, 1983. The date for exercising option under the modified scheme has been extended up to January 31, 1985 for the ongoing projects exercising option under part A of the Scheme and up to February 28, 1985 for projects exercising option under part B of the Scheme.

Other benefits under the Scheme such as conversion of a substantial part of the excess burden emanating from exchange fluctuation into preference shares or debentures of the concerned financial institution at seven percent rate of interest shall continue. Rescheduling arrangements as in existence at the moment will also be available.

The modified scheme provides substantial benefits and concessions to the project sponsors. The Government expects that they will take advantage of the scheme and start clearing their overdues and enter into agreed arrangements with the financial institutions in the interest of developing and strengthening the base of industrialisation through efforts of the private sector.

Impact Examined

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 27 Dec 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] All foreign currency loans converted by donor countries into grants and disbursed by Development Financial Institutions (DFIs)--Bangladesh Shilpa Bank (BSB) and Bangladesh Shilpa Rin Sangstha (BSRS), will be treated as taka loans.

The rate of exchange prevailing on the dates on which the loans were converted into grants by the donors would be the basis for calculation for loan liability (in taka terms) of the borrowers from the DFIs. The normal terms and conditions for local currency loans will be applicable for updating the loan liability of such borrowers.

The individual borrowers from the DFIs will have to exercise their option within the next two months to avail themselves of the facilities under the new arrangement.

In cases where the foreign currency loans disbursed by the BSB and BSRS have not been converted into grants by the donors, the loans will also be converted into taka loans on the basis of rate of exchange prevailing on the due date/dates of repayment. The excess burden falling on borrowers of such loans because of exchange rate depreciation will be determined in a straightforward and uniform manner on the basis of difference between the taka liability on the due date/dates of repayment and the taka currency

liability on the date/dates of corresponding disbursements of foreign currency loans for coverage under the Exchange Fluctuations Absorption Scheme (EFAS).

The EFAS, to recall here, was introduced in August 1983 to offer some protection to the industrial loanees and investors from fluctuations in exchange rate which contributed very largely to the 'accumulation of heavy repayment liability to BSB and BSFS.' The impact of exchange rate fluctuations on loan liability of the borrowers can be understood from the fact that dollar-taka rate was 1:4.8 before December 16, '71 and soon after independence this exchange rate became Taka eight per dollar. In 1975 there was again substantial devaluation and the rate became Taka 13 to a dollar. In subsequent years there has been further depreciation of taka, it was 16 5 in 1980-81, Taka 18 9 in 1981-82, Taka 22 6 in 1982-83, Taka 24 5 in 1983-84 and presently the official exchange rate is over Taka 25 50.

An authoritative source in the Ministry of Finance told this correspondent on Wednesday that the amendments to EFAS announced on Monday last was purported to provide additional relief to the borrowers from the adverse impact of exchange rate fluctuations over the years and to encourage them to start repayment of loans to the DFIs under easier terms and conditions. He claimed that the new modifications to EFAS had ensured 'substantial relief' to the borrowers.

It is not yet known as to what would be the quantum of relief in financial terms under the new arrangement. The Finance Ministry has directed the DFIs to work out the loan liability of the borrowers in the light of the new arrangements and the exercise is likely to take three months' time.

A rough estimate, however, suggests that the total amount of the cumulative loan burden of the borrowers is likely to come down by over 30 percent following the modification to EFAS. In case of one particular borrower in the specialised textile sector, the outstanding loan liability to BSB has come down from Taka 1.75 crore to Taka 75 lakh only after Monday's announcement by the Ministry of Finance relating to modification of EFAS, according to a source.

CSO: 4600/1253

BANGLADESH

LEADING BKSAL MEMBERS RETURN TO AWAMI LEAGUE-H

Top Leaders Leave

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 29 Dec 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Bangladesh Krishak Sramik Awami League (BKSAL) face break-up following exodus of seven of its top leaders.

The seven leaders along with fourteen other workers returned to the fold of Awami League (Hasina).

Later in a press release, the BKSAL issued show cause notices on seven central leaders.

Signed by Hemayetuddin Ahmed, the press release said Messrs Raushan Ali, S.M. Yusuf, Shafiqul Azia Mukul, Yahya Choudhury Pintu, Sayed Rezaur Rahman, Khan Tipu Sultan and Mahmuda Choudhury have been released from all responsibility of the party and show cause why their primary memberships should not be cancelled. The action has been taken for their anti-party activities, the press release said.

Earlier the Awami League (H) formally welcomed the BKSAL leaders with party chief Sheikh Hasina Wajed declaring he had no 'factions.'

"You have given me responsibility to lead you. If you think you don't need me, I will leave the party," she told the welcoming function.

Adamjee Nagar Faction

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 9 Jan 85 p 3

[Text] The BKSAL faction of Adamjee Nagar Jatiya Sramik League on Monday joined Awami League faction of the organisation by dissolving their committee, according to a Press release.

A function was held at Awami League (H) Central office on the occasion. Messrs Abdul Malek Ukil, Abdus Sammad Azad, Zillur Rahman, Amir Hussain Amu and other Awami League leaders were present at the function. Mr Hafiz Uddin Manik announced the joining decision on behalf of the labour leaders, the Press release said.

CSO: 4600/1267

BANGLADESH

STATISTICS ON PETROLEUM IMPORTS FOR 1983-1984 GIVEN

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 9 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Text] The import of crude petroleum and petroleum products in 1983-84 cost the country 325 million dollars which was roughly 41 percent of the total export earning of the year.

Last year an additional quantity of around 72,000 tons of furnace oil was purchased beyond the import programme to cover up the deficit at the power stations caused by the short supply of natural gas. The additional import of furnace oil cost around 12.6 million dollars and the purchases were made in Singapore and Sri Lanka on the spot quotation basis. The additional purchase, however, would not affect the import budget as there was a fall in price of petro-product in the international market following finalisation of the budget.

In 1983-84, Bangladesh for the first time imported lub oil and diesel from the People's Republic of China under barter. During the previous years import of lub and diesel under barter were mainly from Romania and the USSR. Bangladesh imports 40,000 tons of diesel every year from the USSR under barter but in the last year import from the USSR fell by 50 percent.

Bangladesh has to procure both crude oil and refined product every year to meet her requirement. Crude oil purchased from abroad is generally refined at the refineries at Chittagong and Singapore. But last year there had been no import of crude oil for processing at Singapore because the total costing price of refined product was cheaper than the cost involved in purchasing crude and refining. Crude oil is generally purchased from Saudi Arabia and the UAE and the refined products are procured through spot purchase. Besides, 40,000 tons of refined product are procured from the socialist countries under barter every year.

The gross oil bill for the year 1983-84 was around 350 million dollars last year and of this, import of crude for processing at the Chittagong Refinery consumed 230 million dollars and import of deficit petroleum products (refined) consumed 120 million dollars. The quantity of crude purchased for processing at Chittagong was one million tons and refined products was 435,000 tons. The refined products included diesel, jet oil, kerosene and furnace oil.

The export of naphtha--an upper distillate product from the Eastern Refinery--fetched an amount of 25 million dollars during the last financial year.

CSO: 4600/1266

BANGLADESH

REPORTAGE ON POSITION OF STRANDED PAKISTANIS

Foreign Office Comments

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 1 Jan 85 pp 1, 7

[Text] A Foreign Office spokesman on Monday firmly rejected the suggestion carried by official Pakistan news agency APP that the problem of stranded Pakistanis was the problem of Bangladesh, reports BSS.

Commenting on recent statements in Pakistan on the problem, the spokesman said that if correctly reported, these statements are not in keeping with agreements arrived at between Pakistan and Bangladesh. These statements from Pakistan, he said, negate the humanitarian spirit that has thus far characterised discussions on this subject.

The spokesman reiterated Bangladesh's continued readiness to resolve the problem in a humanitarian spirit and in a spirit of friendship and Islamic brotherhood through mutual discussion either bilaterally or under the auspices of any international forum.

Referring to the description of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh as the beggars, spokesman took serious exception and said that these hapless Muslims do not deserve such pejorative and inaccurate description which is offensive to the tenets of Islam.

Most of the stranded Pakistani Muslims, the spokesman said, are skilled workers who have been desperately wanting to go to their own homeland now for about a decade and a half. In fact, many of them were employees of the Federal Government of erstwhile Pakistan. During the last 14 years the Government of Bangladesh has gone out of its way to alleviate their sufferings within its limited means purely out of Islamic humanitarian concern for these unfortunate members of the Jmmah.

Bangladesh continues to be ready to resolve this problem in a humanitarian spirit and in a spirit of friendship and Islamic brotherhood through mutual discussion either bilaterally or under the auspices of any international forum.

Meanwhile the stranded Pakistanis in Dhaka on Monday staged a demonstration protesting Sunday's Karachi police firing on what they call "innocent Biharis" and Islamabad's indifferent attitude towards their long-standing demand for repatriation to Pakistan.

Organised by the 'Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee' (SPGRD) the Pakistanis from Mohammadpur Mirpur, Adamjeenagar and Dhaka city brought out a peaceful procession and paraded the city streets.

The processionists dispersed at Baitul Mukarram after holding Ghaibana Namaz e Janaza for those who were killed at Karachi police firing.

According to a Press release, a six hour hartal from dawn to noon was also observed inside all the camps of stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh.

Need for Pressure on Pakistan

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Jan 85 p 5

[Editorial] General Ziaul Huq of Pakistan has expressed his unwillingness to accept the non-locals stranded in Bangladesh on the ground that there is not enough room for them in that country. But earlier, thousands of families had succeeded in going to Pakistan with the assistance of the U.N. Refugee Organisation. And most of the younger people succeeded in going over there. But a large number of people were left behind in this country with half the members of their families having already migrated to Pakistan. Many of those left behind in Bangladesh and willing to go to Pakistan belong to this category of broken families. One of the prime reasons why they are anxious to go to Pakistan is the human desire to be reunited with their families.

This issue of reunion with the families has been a subject of discussion in many countries that have been so divided for political or other reasons--such as East and West Germany, North and South Korea. In some countries the law provides that the dependants of the immigrants will be allowed to join them in their new home country. Thus old parents and minor children are allowed to migrate to the country concerned so that they can be supported by the earning members of the family. It is on this essentially humanitarian ground that world opinion should put pressure on the Pakistani President to accept the members of such divided families and Pakistan should not refuse to do so.

In the event of a favourable decision by Pakistan in this regard, the number of these people now living in camps or outside will certainly be reduced, easing to a great extent a problem that has been vexing both Bangladesh and Pakistan for the last thirteen years.

The issue can also be considered in the perspective of history. When India and Pakistan became independent in 1947 citizens of each territory were given the choice to opt for the other and acquire the citizenship of it. As a result, hundreds of thousands of people crossed the border

both ways. A large number of Urdu-speaking people, for instance, living in Calcutta and working there in various sectors of its economy crossed over to this part of what was then Pakistan. Since their arrival here they had been living and working. It is this category of people who are classed as non-locals. The issue of non-locals came into prominence in 1971 and a bad feeling between the locals and the non-locals got intensified which led to the situation where lakhs of people were considered non-citizens. And many expressed themselves in favour of Pakistan. Since then a tussle has been going on between Bangladesh and Pakistan as to which country will take these people. Much has since been written on the issue both here and elsewhere. It is hardly necessary for us to discuss it afresh.

It may be noted that these people have been artisans and had served here in essential branches of the economy. With their withdrawal from these sectors not only have they suffered but the community also has. Many a technical job was manned by them and their withdrawal was a great blow to the efficiency of these sectors, for instance the railways.

It is time that the controversy over them should be brought to an end through further discussion between the two countries. Those among them who for legal or other reasons will fail to go over to Pakistan should be treated as human beings. It is a moral duty of this country to persuade Pakistan to accept these people and at the same time come to their succour. Those who will fail to go over to Pakistan and will be willing to stay in this country should try to become useful members of this society and participate in the economic development of this country. It is interesting to note that in a recent procession brought out by them the younger among them were chanting slogans in Bengali. This would show, among other things, that those who were born after the birth of Bangladesh have acquired some identity with the local milieu.

Society has come a long way since the time when they, because of the circumstances prevailing then, found their way into camps forming, so to say, a segregated ghetto. If compassion could replace controversy on either side there could be an end to much suffering and a solution to a festering problem.

CSO: 4600/1256

BANGLADESH

BSF DEPLOYMENT INTENSIFIED ALONG PRAGPUR BORDER

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] Kushtia, Jan 2--Deployment of Indian BSF has been intensified along the Pragpur border following troubles to Belgathia village under Daulatpur Upazila here. Indian BSF started non-stop firing for 12 hours on Tuesday last.

A flag meeting was held today between Bangladesh and India in New Shikarpur. Sector Commander of BDR represented Bangladesh while Deputy Inspector-General of BSF led the Indian side. The Deputy Commissioner and Superintendent of Police of Kushtia today visited the spot. The DC met the local people and the BDR jawans in the bunkers.

The BSF firing commenced on Tuesday morning and stopped at night on the same day. Firing was reported till writing of this report on Wednesday afternoon.

As I visited the area 30 miles off Kushtia town, I found marks of firing on the walls of Belgathia Primary School.

Rahim Baksha Malitha, 55, told me that on Tuesday morning at around 10, he found a number of Indians backed by five BSF personnel setting on fire a power pump costing over one lakh Taka, damaging crops and forcibly taking away cattle from the village. The villagers resisted and the Indians escaped. But BSF started non stop firing across the Mathabhanga river till night.

The unprovoked Indian firing was, however, returned by the Bangladesh Rifles stationed at Pragpur border outpost. Asia Khatun, aged 50, told me that the Indians opened fire like showers and their bullets hit the rooftops and walls. There was, however, no casualty on Bangladesh side. The husband of Asia Khatun was very sick and she could not move out from her house.

The inhabitants supplied food and other materials for the BDR jawans. Three freedom fighters of Pragpur union--Nazrul, Kalu and Rabiul fought gallantly against the BSF. As I talked to the people, I found them morally very strong.

It may be mentioned here that India intruded into Bangladesh territory at least 20 times. In 1983, one Bangladeshi was killed when India opened fire at Jamalpur village which was named later Faqurabad after the person killed by the BSF.

CSO: 4600/1259

BANGLADESH

BANGLADESH BANK RAISED INTEREST RATE ON LOANS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 3 Jan 85 pp 1, 10

[Text] The Bangladesh Bank in a new move to control credits and put restraints on money supply has raised the rate of interest on bank borrowings both for internal trading and import financing purposes.

Under this move, interest rate on bank borrowings for internal trade against limits exceeding Taka one lakh has been raised by the Central Bank from 16 percent to 18 percent. For credits and advances for internal trading purposes against limits up to Taka one lakh, the interest rate will be 16 percent. The upward revision in interest rate on advances and credits for internal trading purpose has been made effective from January 1, 1985.

The Bangladesh Bank raised earlier the rate of interest on all advances and credits by the banks on commercial importers including advances against PAD (Payments Against Documents) account relating to commercial import bills as well as other post shipment advances to commercial importers from 16 percent to 18 percent. The new rate of interest made effective from December 15 last, has also been made applicable to advances for purchase of foreign exchange under Wage Earners Scheme/XPL (Export Performance Licence) for commercial imports. The rate of interest on bank borrowings and advances for industrial imports has, however, been kept unchanged.

Meanwhile, a marginal upward revision in bank rate from 10.5 percent to 11 percent has been announced by the Bangladesh Bank with effect from January 1, 1985. This new bank rate will not, however, affect the rate of interest on refinance for agriculture and rural credit programme pre-shipment export finance for traditional exports including jute credit and non-traditional exports and existing bills for traditional items and non-traditional items. Financing of debentures of public sector corporations by banks will not also be affected by the enhancement to the bank rate.

Another Major Credit Restriction

In another major credit restriction imposed by the Bangladesh Bank against fixed deposit receipts (FDR), the rate of interest against FDR was raised to 20 percent with effect from December 1 last. This new rate of interest was also made applicable to all outstanding advances against FDR. The rate

of interest on advances against FDR earlier was enhanced to 16 percent on October 29 last.

Under the new credit control measure now in force, the banks have been asked not to allow any credit facility against two-year special treasury bonds. This order has been made effective for all cases, irrespective of whether the bonds are purchased by declarants under Martial Law Regulation V or by others. This is, however, quite in contravention of the terms and conditionalities which the government announced at the time of issuing the two year special treasury bonds.

The advances by the banks against the security of other financial obligations like government Sanchaya Patras (savings certificates) ICB (Investment Corporation of Bangladesh) Unit Certificates, Wage Earners Development Bond, Insurance Policies, etc and also of gold/gold ornaments are now being charged interests at the rate of 18 percent Minimum marginal requirements for credits and advances against financial obligations have been kept at 20 percent and the banks have been asked to ensure that such advances are made for productive purposes as far possible.

For advances against the security of Non-resident Foreign Currency Deposit Account (NFCD) under Wage Earners Scheme, the marginal requirement has been fixed at 25 percent at the official rate of exchange. The account holders/nominees and members of Dhaka Stock Exchange will be entitled to advances from the banks against the balances in Foreign Currency Accounts under Wage Earners Scheme (WES) up to 50 percent of Taka value at official rate of exchange. The period of repayment for such advances will, however, be 15 days from the date of advance in the case of account holders/nominees and 30 days from the date of advance in the case of members of Stock Exchange.

The loan limit for advances against the security of gold/gold ornaments has been set at Tk 1500 per tola of pure gold and the maximum loan limit per borrower is to be determined on the basis of 15 tolas of pure gold.

While the rate of interest on credits in major fields of bank financing has been raised by the central bank there has been no worthwhile change in the interest rate on bank deposits. Only the interest rate on savings bank account with chequing facility in the rural areas has been raised from 9.5 percent to 10.5 percent and that on savings bank account without chequing facility also in the rural areas from ten percent to 11 percent with effect from January 1, 85. But the interest rate on urban deposits which constitute roughly 85 percent of total bank deposits in the country has remained unchanged. The fixed deposit interest rate has also been kept unaffected though the credits against FDR carry now higher rate of interest than before.

CSO: 4600/1259

BANGLADESH

GANOTANTRIK STANDING COMMITTEE TELLS ELECTION DEMANDS

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 26 Dec 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] Ganotantrik Party yesterday demanded election to a sovereign parliament by February or March 15 on the basis of the national five-point demand and transfer of power to an elected government, reports ENA.

A two-day emergency meeting of the party's Standing Committee which concluded here yesterday reviewed the 48-hour post hartal situation and expressed the views that the present Government should not remain in power since the people gave their nonconfidence in it through hartal. The meeting said the concerned political parties and alliances should take steps immediately for elections for establishment of democracy.

The Standing Committee of the Ganotantrik Party said the election formula of President Lt General H.M. Ershad which he announced on December 15 for the proposed parliamentary elections might be acceptable if the head of the government and officials remain neutral. This would mean acceptance of main substance of the five-point demand, it said.

The meeting held on December 21 and 24 with party Chairman Sirajul Hossain Khan in the chair discussed country's political and economic situation. Haji Mohammad Danesh, Nurul Huda Mirza, Anwar Zahid and Alamgir Mojumder participated in the discussion.

The meeting condemned the killing in Rajshahi and arrests of political workers in different parts of the country during hartal hours. It demanded release of all those who were arrested and withdrawal of cases against them. It also demanded compensation for those who were killed during hartal hours. The meeting demanded of the government to meet the demands of Sramic-Karmachara Okyya Parishad immediately.

The meeting in a resolution said government has accepted most of the five-point national demand and 33-point demand of the Seven-Party Alliance through its proposal of December 15. The proposals included ending of Martial Law in phases, dissolution of Janadal Cabinet for making the government neutral, restoration of basic right and high court writ jurisdiction.

CSO: 4600/1252

BANGLADESH

PAPERS ON PLAN FULFILLMENT, FORMULATION

Second Plan Shortcomings

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 4 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Article by Syed Badiuzzaman]

[Text] A total of 541 projects were 'physically completed' in first four years of the Second Five Year Plan ending June last at a cost of Taka 10449 crore.

This represents 61.3 percent of the actual number (883) of projects targeted for completion in four years out of 1890 taken up under the Second Five Year Plan (SFYP).

The utilization of funds out of allocation up to June last was 89 percent while that of the total allocation for the plan was 65 percent, according to a competent source.

It may be pointed out that the total estimated allocation for the Second Five Year Plan is Taka 16060 crore and the allocation under the Annual Development Programmes for five years including 1984-85 is Taka 15690 crore.

The maximum number of projects (334) were taken up in transport sector under the SFYP followed by 236 projects in agriculture sector, 208 projects in water resources sector, 192 projects in physical planning and housing sector, 180 projects in industries and mineral resources sector and 115 projects in education sector.

The highest amount of fund to the tune of Taka 2702 crore was allocated for the water resources sector under the SFYP followed by Taka 2149 crore for agriculture sector, Taka 2130 crore for power sector, Taka 2042 crore for industries and mineral resources sector and Taka 1819 crore for transport sector.

In first four years of the Second Five Year Plan, the number of physically completed projects in agriculture sector stood at 60 while that in industries sector 50, transport 83, water resources sector 63, physical planning

and housing sector 68, power sector 19 and education sector 54 as against their respective numbers of 124, 88, 106, 72, 101, 30 and 59 targetted for completion.

Meanwhile, under the Annual Development Programme (ADP) of the current financial year, a total of 914 projects have been taken up. Of them, 239 schemes were listed to be completed and there is a plan to include remaining 675 projects in the Third Five Year Plan scheduled to be launched from fiscal 1985-86.

It has been seen that most of the projects are either time-over-run or cost-over-run. Many constraints have been listed for it. Main of them are insufficient funds and procedural and administrative delays resulted from lack of coordination between agencies and organisations concerned.

Third Plan Soon

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 4 Jan 85 p 1

[Text] The Planning Commission is working on the framework of the Third Five-year Plan stressing on policy identification, sector-wise development prospect, Government policy on poverty income distribution; employment and balanced regional development. The Commission is expected to give final shape to the draft plan by the end of February and it will be made available for public debate in March.

The experts of the Planning Commission are now analysing the data received from various sectors showing the performance prospect and employment position. After analysing the data, the Planning Commission will suggest policy package needed for implementation of the Third Five-year Plan. According to a source close to the Commission, there is no possibility of a major shift in the policy of the Government in the Third Five-year Plan.

The Third Five-year Plan which will be launched from July next is expected to fix the rise in Gross Domestic Product at 6.8 percent against the 5.4 percent target set in the Second Five-year Plan, but the performance of the last two plans shows that the GDP targets were never achieved. The targets should be based on realities and past experiences, observes an economist. The target of food production has been fixed at 20.78 million tons in 1989-90 and additional 5.65 million employment generation.

The development outlay of the Third Plan has been estimated at 28,481 crore Taka as against the final estimate of Taka 17; 288 crore in 1980-85 (at constant price).

The basic objective of the Third Five-year Plan is to attain noticeable improvement in the standard of living of the common people through the expansion of opportunities for productive employment and increased supplies of basic needs goods. The estimated level of unemployment will be reduced from 29.8 percent in 1984-85 to the level of 22.5 percent in 1989-90.

CSO: 4600/1260

BANGLADESH

BNP EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES ELECTION CONDITIONS

Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 21 Dec 84 pp 1, 8

[Text] BNP has put forward seven conditions before the Martial Law Government for holding free and fair elections to restore a representative government in the country.

A three-day extended meeting of the party executive committee which concluded yesterday reviewed the announcement and put forward the conditions.

The conditions include 1) President and CMLA will not participate directly or indirectly in election campaign in favour or against any candidate, 2) ministers who were linked with political parties and the 18-point programme cannot remain in the government and others in the government cannot participate in election campaign directly or indirectly in favour or against any candidate, 3) Assurances must be given that existing civil laws will continue in the country after the abolition of all posts and positions under martial law till new parliament goes into session, 4) No schedule for the presidential election should be announced before parliament goes into session, 5) Within ten days of the parliamentary elections, election results will have to be published through gazette notification, 6) Immediate restoration of all fundamental rights and writ jurisdiction under the constitution, and 7) Withdrawal of all cases pending with the Martial Law Courts and Special Tribunal and setting aside all the judgements given against political leaders and workers, former ministers and MPs and withdrawal of all warrants of arrest.

The BNP said that it would continue its movement for restoration of democracy and that elections must be held on the basis of the national 5-point demand.

CSO: 4600/1248

BANGLADESH

CORRESPONDENT DISCUSSES BNP ELECTION POLICIES

Dhaka HOLIDAY in English 4 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Article by Mahmud Rashid]

[Text] The electioneering politics of BNP appears to be revolving round the issue of setting aside the cases of its ten former ministers convicted under martial law.

The party has expressed resentment at the silence of the government on this issue in its Press Note issued on Tuesday in view of the conditions laid down by the major parties to ensure a free and fair election.

An extended meeting of the party held on Wednesday at its central office with Begum Khaleda Zia in the chair witnessed a hot debate on the question of participating in the election without those convicted under martial law.

The party has resolved to renew its demand for setting aside the cases of those leaders who were convicted by military courts and tribunals.

It may be pointed out here that investigation was ordered by late president Ziaur Rahman, then BNP chairman too, against his fourteen ministers who had come under a volley of allegations from different quarters.

Later in February of 1982, the National Security Council which was constituted following the dissolution of cabinet by then President Justice Abdus Sattar on the charges of inefficiency and rampant corruption decided in its first meeting to resume investigation against 14 ministers of the BNP government.

The former BNP ministers convicted by military courts on various charges are: former Deputy Prime Minister Jamaluddin Ahmed, former Deputy Prime Minister S.A. Bari A.T., former Civil Aviation Minister K.M. Obaidur Rahman, former Public Works Minister Abul Hasnat, former Finance Minister Saifur Rahman, former Establishment Minister Maj Gen (retd) Majedul Huq, former State minister for Commerce Tanveer Ahmed Siddiqui, former state minister for Manpower Ataudin Khan, former Youth Affairs Minister Abul Kashem and former Jute Minister Habibullah Khan.

Cases were also instituted against former Deputy Prime Minister Moudud Ahmed, former Ports and Shipping Minister Capt (retd) Nurul Huq and former Petroleum and Energy Minister Lt Col (retd) Akbar Hossain. Besides, a case is still pending against former telecommunication Minister Moyeedul Islam.

Moudud Ahmed was tried by a military court which convicted him and awarded sentences. Later his case was withdrawn and he came out of prison. Capt (retd) Nurul Huq was tried in absentia. His case was also withdrawn upon his return from exile.

Akbar Hossain was wanted in a case against him, but it did not come up for trial. Upon his return home from abroad he was taken into police custody for a short while. The government set aside the case against him.

Moyeedul Islam was apprehended in connection with cases filed against him at Ramna police station by the anti-corruption department. He is now enlarged on bail.

CSO: 4600/1261

BANGLADESH

JAMAAT-E-ISLAMI LEADERS STATE POLL REQUIREMENTS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 26 Dec 84 p 1

[Text] The central Majlish-e-Shura of Jamaat-e-Islami at a meeting held on Tuesday asserted that the elections must be held by the first half of April by accepting the demands for a free and fair polls and cautioned the Government not to defer the election date.

The meeting in a resolution said that it was the responsibility of the Government to create congenial atmosphere for bringing the Opposition political parties to elections. The Shura said the elections must be held on the basis of the suspended Constitution and there cannot be any alternative to that. The people will not cooperate with any Government other than an elected one, the Shura asserted, and warned that the people would resist any more to hold any 'yes' or 'no' vote to perpetuate power. The Shura resolution stated that if the referendum is held by using the name of Islam it will have serious consequences. The Shura held that if the Government is run by the people, Islam would be established as the people want Islam.

Majlish-e-Shura, the highest body of the Jamaat-e-Islami cautioned that if the Martial Law is tightened further by snatching away the political rights of the people and the Armed Forces is used against the people the consequences would be very dangerous for the nation.

The Majlish-e-Shura in a resolution said that there was no need to promulgate Martial Law except fulfilling the lust for power for a handful of ambitious people and the Martial Law which was promulgated to root out corruption has not been successful and corruption has spread at every sphere of life. The meeting observed that the armed forces were coming in direct confrontation with the people as the democratic movement was prolonging. The Shura demanded handing over of power to elected representatives of the people. The Shura regretted the President's announcement that Janadal is his own party which came immediately after his announcement that there would be no political ministers in his Cabinet. The Shura wanted an announcement about the role of President in the election.

The Majlish-e-Shura reiterated its demand that the schedule for presidential elections must not be declared before the announcement of results of the Parliament election. The Shura hoped that the unprecedented unity among the political parties for ensuring the free and fair polls should continue till the final victory is achieved.

CSO: 4600/1251

BANGLADESH

AWAMI LEAGUE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE SETS POLL CONDITIONS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Dec 84 p 1

[Text] Awami League has set seven conditions for a free and fair Parliament elections.

A clear announcement for immediate withdrawal of Martial Law as per five-point demand instead of the plan for phase-wise lifting of Martial Law as declared by President Ershad is the first condition. The other conditions include formation of a neutral caretaker government by dissolving the present Janadal cabinet, the President himself must not associate with any political party nor he can support and campaign in favour of any party in the election. The President must ensure full neutrality on his part in conducting the election affairs. No announcement about presidential elections should be made without the consent of the Jatiya Sangsad formation of an Election Commission by dissolving the present one to create confidence in the public mind about the neutral character of the Commission, a clear explanation on the writ jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and restoration of the fundamental rights and constitutional obligation of the judiciary, a press release of the party said.

The conditions were decided at an adjourned general meeting of the central executive committee held on Tuesday at the party's central office with Sheikh Hasina in the chair.

The Awami League central executive committee made it clear that there was no alternative to movement for realisation of the five-point demand. The party urged the countrymen to observe the 48-hour hartal on December 22 and 23 and lead the present mass movement to the final victory.

The Awami League Press release said that President Ershad had given his "confusing" announcement on the Parliament election without fulfilling the five-point demand and taking positive steps for a free and fair polls as a part of the military government's design to bring a blame on the opposition political parties for their indifference to election."

CSO: 4600/1247

BANGLADESH

EDITORIAL EXAMINES RECORD OF GANGES TALKS

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 19 Dec 84 p 5

[Editorial]

[Text]

The 26th JRC meeting held in Delhi on January 15 has been as fruitless as the whole series of them before it. The plausible conclusion to which the proceedings seem to point is that it is no use flogging the dead horse and that the movement of delegations to and fro, periodically, looks more like holiday trips undertaken at the cost of the exchequer. The more-than three-decade old dispute interspersed with meetings held in the two capitals with practically nothing achieved on a viable basis has cost us not a little in simple terms of travelling expenses—to say nothing of the other strains resulting from frustration and the terrible prospect of nearly a third of the country turning into a desert for want of water from the Ganges.

Even while hope and patience tend to wear thin the fact remains: Bangladesh is in desperate need of the Ganges water and must, as a lower riparian, get its due share of water, Farakka or no Farakka. The facts of the Bangladesh case are simply these: The Indira-Ershad agreement signed in October 1982 expired on May 31 this year. Bangladesh's endeavour and anxiety ever since have been to have a long-term and new agreement on the share of the Ganges water. But Indian insistence on the question of augmentation of the dry season Ganges flows against Bangladesh's desire for a sharing agreement, first, was all the outcome of the Delhi meeting. Our delegates have since returned home and have only given us their 'concern' about the water—but no water.

Yet the question is a serious one for us, and we have four main ways of dealing with it: (1) bilateral high level-talk (like the one just held), (2) local or regional pressure of opinion created in favour of an equitable settlement of the dispute, (3) taking the dispute to an international tribunal, e.g. the UN and the International Court of Justice, (4) falling back on our own resources. The last mentioned expedient may however be initiated while the two others are kept going. Judging by what has been received so far from bilateral talks and what may predictably be, we are left with the second and particularly with the fourth means of handling it.

It is in this regard that our endeavour still leaves much to be desired. On record is the lone effort made at the sixth committee of the Legal Committee of the U.N. General Assembly in 1976. The immediate response from the audience was favourable. But as usual our delegates reportedly soon busied themselves with shopping and eventually returned home. No follow-up along the needed expert line had since been seriously attempted. One reason for it, according to informed quarters, is lack of expertise to help the foreign ministry pursue the case of a lower riparian vis-a-vis an upper-riparian with adequate legal arguments in favour of the latter's case. But under international law Bangladesh's case is not as hopeless as it has been made to appear simply for lack of proper logistic and expert support. A parallel case is the dispute over Colorado river between Mexico and the U.S. Mexico's case was almost as desperate as Bangladesh's. Vast tracts of land in the Mexically valley went barren and desolate for want of water. In the face of Mexican importunity for years the U.S. was eventually brought to signing an agreement nearly half a century ago. But the upstream withdrawal of water for industrial purposes and the discharge of the same loaded with chemical waste and heavily salinated, led to a second agreement during the time of President Nixon. Under the agreement desalination plants were installed at the proper points at U.S. cost and Mexico got pure water enough for irrigation and agriculture.

Besides, irrespective of agreements, international river waters are to be shared equitably by upper and lower riparians under the provisions of the Customary International Law which is binding on all states. In fact, nearly three-fourth of the international rivers and the sharing of their waters is regulated under this law. It appears that for want of precise information and legal expertise this point has yet to be given the emphasis it should receive.

Against the background of what has been done—or not done, in order not to repeat the erstwhile exercises in futility let us take a more pragmatic stand based on the earnest of something positively to be achieved, if at all, in any future JRC meeting. The earnest had better be sought and received by our spokesman from his Indian counterpart. Because it is the latter that is to deliver the goods—if, let us hope, it will have the will to do so.

In any case we have to do the needful to get our legitimate share of international water under international law. It would be the most nihilistic of attitudes only to sit down by the waters of the Ganges and weep—and do nothing either on our own—or through recognised international legal media.

CSO: 4600/1247

BANGLADESH

PAPER EXAMINES CONTENTS OF LATEST GANGES TALKS

Dhaka HOLIDAY in English 21 Dec 84 pp 1, 8

[Article by Ahmed Fazl Siddiqui]

[Text] The 27th Bangladesh India Joint Rivers Commission talks on the Ganges which ended within a day last Saturday in New Delhi has shown a hardening of attitude of the Indian side belying hopes for an early accord on water sharing, according to authoritative sources here.

The sources said that the talks which were obviously brief constrained by the limitations of time were used by the Indian delegation to stress that there could be no sensible dialogue on the sharing of the water of the disputed Ganges without any progress on the augmentation of the dry season flow of the river.

The 27th session in the Indian capital was held between Bangladesh Irrigation Minister Air Vice Marshal (retd) K.M. Aminul Islam and his new Indian counterpart Mr Zafar Shareef. The sources said that although there were new negotiators on the scene, it was the old tune that was harped, and this time with a stronger emphasis on linking the augmentation issue with that of sharing.

Local river experts say that with the old agreement on sharing having expired in May last, Bangladesh does not have any legal guarantee from India that its rightful share will not be endangered.

Sources close to the Bangladesh delegation at the talks said that India had repeatedly stressed that the river Brahmaputra and the possible use of water from that common river for augmentation of the Ganges were more important issues than the actual sharing while Bangladesh insisted that it needed an agreement immediately to avoid a legal vacuum on sharing when the critical dry season starts in March and April.

Observers are of the opinion that the current Indian stand is contrary to the spirit of the 1974 accord on the Ganges signed by the Prime Ministers of the two countries which says that the two sides must work out an agreement before the Farraka barrage in India is commissioned.

The sources said that although the New Delhi meeting had ended without any agreement, the Indian side gave no definite indication as to when a fresh round of talks was possible.

There is another reason to worry about the prospects for delay of any future negotiation on the issue. Very highly placed sources said that Mr Shareef was not likely to remain the Irrigation Minister in India after the elections despite an assured Congress (I) victory next Monday. The Indian Irrigation Secretary Mr M.G. Padhye is slated for retirement next January and Mr Rangachari, the Indian member of the Joint Rivers Commission has been promoted to the Indian Water Commission. These changes in the Indian irrigation bureaucracy is likely to cause another delay because the new incumbents would take some time to familiarise themselves with the issues.

But while this process continues there will be justifiable concern in Dhaka about the sharing issue.

Observers say that Bangladesh's right to the Ganges river is inalienable, but they stress that the delay in the signing of a new agreement means that this right is being ignored.

An official who participated in the one-day discussions said that they found no reason in holding the 27th [words indistinct] certain that there would be no progress in the talks on Ganges sharing.

"It's not back to square one, it is even more discouraging than that," the official said.

CSO: 4600/1249

BANGLADESH

PRESS AGENCY INTERVIEWS JANADAL SECRETARY GENERAL

Dhaka THE BANGLADESH TIMES in English 9 Jan 85 pp 1, 8

[Text] The Secretary General of Janadal, Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury indicated the possibility of forming a political front of like-minded parties to fight the ensuing elections to parliament and the presidency.

Talking to ENA he stated any political party willing to join the front will be welcome to do so.

The Janadal leader underscored the urgency of unity and understanding so vitally necessary for transition to democracy which is of paramount importance at this crucial juncture of our national life.

In reply to a question concerning referendum, he proposed, Mizan Chowdhury stated he suggested it would only ascertain people's wish on the question of election in the event of opposition boycott.

In response to another question, Mizan Chowdhury said he would not face any difficulty whatsoever in organising Janadal in the event of resignation or dismissal of the members of his party from the cabinet. He said he was used to opposition politics and in his long and chequered political career he had organised parties outside the purview of the government.

The Janadal Secretary General told this questioner no Janadal leader would prefer cabinet post to his party.

The Janadal Secretary General thought climate conducive to elections had been created and therefore the opposition should come forward without any reservation to take part in the poll and help avert the crisis facing the nation.

In reply to a question concerning candidature for the forthcoming presidential poll, Mizan Chowdhury stated Gen Ershad without doubt is the best candidate for that exalted office. He said his organisation would be only too happy to field him as its candidate for the coming presidential contest.

When his attention was drawn to the reactions of the two opposition alliances to the latest Press Note on the question of election, the Janadal leader advised them to renounce their rigid position and participate in the ensuing election to help provide a durable democratic system to the country.

He tendered a note of advice to the opposition by saying it would be a sheer futility to continue their so-called struggle for restoration of democracy particularly when the President himself had volunteered to end Martial Law and restore democracy.

CSO: 4600/1265

BANGLADESH

BRIEFS

BORDER INCIDENT REPORTED--Rangpur, Jan 9--One person was killed and another kidnapped by the Indian Border Security Force (BSF) from the border village Char Fulbari under Rowmari upazila. It was gathered that BSF personnel along with a group of Indian nationals recently trespassed into Bangladesh territory and kidnapped Phul Mia and Abul Hossain, both inhabitants of Char Fulbari. After beating them mercilessly Paul Mia was shot dead while Abul Hossain thrown into hajat. The body of Phul Mia has not yet been returned. The incident was confirmed by local BDR. According to a delayed information reaching here today, some goats had crossed into Bangladesh territory and damaged crops in the field. The villagers caught two of the goats and held in a house. This followed trespass into Bangladesh by BSF and Indian nationals and kidnapping the two innocent villagers from their village home. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 10 Jan 85 p 1]

COMMUNIST DEMANDS--Mr Md Farhad, General Secretary of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), yesterday demanded of the Government to release all leaders and workers of his party arrested in the wake of hartal on December 22 and 23, and withdrawal of Warrants of Arrest against others in the interest of creating a congenial political atmosphere in the country. The CPB leader, in a statement alleged following the 48-hour hartal. Police searched houses of trade union leaders including Saifuddin Ahmed Manik and Manjurul Ahsan Khan and issued warrants of arrest against them. These steps had already made the situation complicated and the situation would get complicated further unless the arrested persons were released and all repressive measures were stopped. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 29 Dec 84 pp 1, 8]

PRISONERS IN BURMA--Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights in a statement on Wednesday regretted that the government did not take any effective measures for the release of a number of Bangladesh nationals now detained in Burmese jails for long. It referred to the recent press reports on the release and return of 56 Bangladesh nationals from the Burmese jails and said many more such helpless Bangladesh nationals remained in confinement in Burmese jails since before and after the independence of Bangladesh. The Society described such incidents as 'painful, tragic and devoid of human rights.' The Society asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take appropriate measures in this regard without further delay

and secure release and return of those Bangladesh nationals from Burmese jails by submitting a list of the detained persons from here. [Text]
[Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 28 Dec 84 p 3]

ABU DHABI CROWN PRINCE--Abu Dhabi, Dec 13 (BSS)--The Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, will pay an official visit to Bangladesh at the invitation of Prime Minister Ataur Rahman Khan, it was officially announced here today, reports BSS. In a meeting with the Bangladesh Ambassador here recently, the Crown Prince had said that he would be very happy to visit Bangladesh at a mutually convenient date. During the discussion, Sheikh Khalifa commended the existing cordial relations between Bangladesh and the United Arab Emirates. The relations were further strengthened following the visit to Bangladesh of President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan in May this year. [Text] [Dhaka THE NEW NATION in English 14 Dec 84 p 1]

NEW TURKISH ENVOY--The Ambassador designate of Turkey, Mr Halit Guvener, presented his credentials to the President and Chief Martial Law Administrator Lt Gen H.M. Ershad at Bangabhaban on Saturday morning, reports BSS. Presenting his letter of credence, Mr Guvener expressed the hope that the existing friendly ties and brotherly cooperation between Bangladesh and Turkey would be further strengthened to the mutual benefit of the two peoples. Reciprocating similar sentiments President Ershad assured the new envoy of all possible help and assistance in the smooth discharge of his duties during his tenure of office in Bangladesh. Earlier, on his arrival at Bangabhaban, Mr Guvener was given a guard of honour by the President's Guard Regiment. He took salute and inspected the guard. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 6 Jan 85 p 3]

JATIYA OIKYA FRONT DEMAND--Jatiya Oikya Front demanded holding of the national elections for transition to democracy and urged the government not to defer the elections on any pretext. The Presidium of the Jatiya Oikya Front at a meeting on Thursday with Khandaker Mustaque Ahmed in the chair resolved that there was no alternative to elections for transition to democracy and the Front did not want extension of Martial Law even for a day. The Front observed that the people were in favour of a peaceful transition to a representative government through holding national elections. In another resolution, the Front reiterated its unstinted faith in Islamic values, end of Martial Law, holding of elections free from government influence and resistance to aggressive forces. In support of these demands the Front has chalked out a programme to hold 19 mass rallies between December 29 and December 31. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 28 Dec 84 p 1]

UN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP--New York, Dec 12--Bangladesh was elected on Monday unanimously a member of the UN Committee for Programme and Coordination by the United Nations General Assembly for a three-year term beginning January next, reports BSS. This is the first time that Bangladesh has been elected to this important UN body. Others elected were Trinidad and Togo, Belorussian SSR, Yugoslavia, FRG, Netherlands and the UK. The 21-member Committee for Programme and Coordination functions as the main

subsidiary organ of ECOSOC and the UN General Assembly for Planning Programming and Coordination and is chartered with the responsibilities of considering the activities of programmes of agencies of the UN system on a sector by sector basis and recommending guidelines for coherence and coordination throughout the system as a whole. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 13 Dec 84 p 1]

AMBASSADOR TO VIETNAM--The Government has decided to concurrently accredit Mr A.M. Mustafizur Rahman, at present Ambassador of Burma, as Bangladesh Ambassador to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, it was officially announced in Dhaka on Tuesday, reports BSS. [Text] [Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English 5 Dec 84 p 3]

CSO: 4600/1269

INDIA

BHOPAL GAS TRAGEDY EXAMINED

New Delhi DINMAN in Hindi 16-22 Dec 84 pp 17, 18

[Editorial: "Means and View"]

[Text] About 2 years ago, PARCHAND, a weekly, in its 30 December 1982 issue, carried a long report entitled "Death Chamber of Union Carbide." This report started with the following text in bold type: "The innocent population of Bhopal is not aware that one morning they may be dead. Phosgene, a colorless gas, stocked in the Union Carbide plant near this city, might enter their body with oxygen and make their sleep permanent."

The report clearly mentioned that there was a leak in the gas chamber. Every other day one or more Union Carbide workers were hospitalized for treatment after exposure to this gas. They referred to a supervisor in the phosgene chamber resigning and moving to another company for this reason. Many other newspapers have pointed to the possibility of a gas leak in this plant and the serious dangers of such a leak. The issue was also raised in Parliament. All we got from this was an assurance that everything was safe. Now the world has witnessed the greatest industrial tragedy in history. Union Carbide, manufacturer of pesticides, has committed genocide of innocent Bhopal citizens. Now there will be inquiries and some people will be blamed for this tragedy. The question as to when our government will become aware of the important problem of environmental pollution is here to stay now.

The chairman of this international company, Mr Anderson, was arrested in Bhopal. His release within few hours and transportation to New Delhi in a government plane makes our government look like a joke. Now there is this big problem of compensating the families of people killed in this tragedy. The Madhya Pradesh Government has announced that it will sue this international company for this purpose. Two internationally famous U.S. lawyers have already filed two suits for \$15 and \$2 billion in U.S. courts. These lawyers have already conferred with Mr Mathur, attorney general of Madhya Pradesh, and Mr Qureshi, chief legal adviser to the Madhya Pradesh Government. One of the lawyers, Mr Bailey, is considered an expert in such matters. He has sued the U.S., Japanese and Soviet Governments on behalf of people affected by the Soviet downing of the Korean jet. One British and two Indian lawyers are helping Mr Bailey.

This group of lawyers first offered to help the Madhya Pradesh Government sue Union Carbide in their initial meeting with government officials. The foreign lawyers were very warmly welcomed by Madhya Pradesh Government officials in the beginning. These lawyers were even told about the demands that the government was going to make. However, when these lawyers returned to Madhya Pradesh state house the second time, they were sent back after a formal reception. According to some informed sources, this change in attitude resulted from suspicion that these lawyers were sympathetic to Union Carbide. Spokesmen for the Madhya Pradesh Government refused to elaborate on this issue. They were having enough problems covering the fiasco of the arrest and release of Mr Anderson.

Chief Minister Arjun Singh's three or four trips to New Delhi within a week left his opponents wondering. They declared openly that he would have been released if the elections were not so close. There must have been some understanding between the state and central governments about Mr Anderson's arrest and release. The U.S. Government must have used its influence in the "honorable acquittal" of Mr Anderson. This may be the first time in India's history that the White House was directly involved in helping an official of a private company.

Indian industrialists expressed shock at this arrest. However, they have yet to show their shock at the suffering of almost half of Bhopal's population and the evacuation of an entire city during the inactivation of the remaining gas. Mr Arjun Singh has declared that he will be present when the remaining gas is inactivated.

The chief minister may repeatedly deny that he was not influenced by the central government or any other leader in the Anderson decision, but no one is going to believe him. He was with the prime minister and did not discuss anything about arresting an internationally prominent industrialist! The chief minister and many other people are using this mass murder as a tool for their election plans.

Meanwhile, officials at Union Carbide headquarters have been saying that they had criticized safety procedures followed at the Bhopal plant and had warned the management there. Indian managers of the plant were blamed for not following up on recommendations. In other words, the U.S. component of the company is not accepting any blame. The question arises: Why did not they fire Indian officials for not following the recommended precautionary measures? This has become a deliberate Hiroshima-like exercise against the Indian people. Now they are looking for a way out. The officials who made these recommendations are the same who had earlier admitted that the Bhopal plant was not equipped with the precautionary measures used in Union Carbide's [West] Virginia plant. In Bhopal, they did not even have the warning system currently in effect in [West] Virginia. Of course, who but the Indian management is at fault!

Several new and old questions are being asked in this connection. Who pressured Anderson's release? Such questions are usually tossed at people

fighting for political power and connected with international companies. Actually, the chief minister is being sympathetic for the people hurt in this disaster and bothered by the corrupt bureaucrats who traditionally have been influenced by these international companies. Several Union Carbide employees had met with newspaper reporters and government officers with complaints about safety at the plant. They were given false promises by government officials that comprehensive safety plans were being implemented soon. Thus, the government and its intelligent workers kept silent and pushed the Union Carbide employees and residents of Bhopal toward the pit of death. The government site inspectors just made their periodic inspection visits and stamped everything as safe!

Who are these government officers who kept distributing "fitness reports" in the face of the warning reports by American officials criticizing defective safety measures at Bhopal? Why were these government officers, who distributed those "fitness certificates" while enjoying the facilities of the Union Carbide guest house, not arrested along with Mr Mahendra and Mr Gokhale, the heads of Union Carbide in India?

There are some new questions. These are related to U.S. policy toward Third World countries. In Canada, such a plant using poisonous gas was not permitted within 15 kilometers of a city, but in India it was operating in a densely populated city. The procedure for manufacturing phosgene has been banned in the United States for 4 years. (the fact that Hitler used it in his gas chambers must be bothering them). How come a very important American company was making this gas in a densely populated city like Bhopal?

After the Bhopal accident, Mr Reagan said earnestly that, "A plant or factory follows the laws of the country where it is located and not of the United States." Mr Reagan wants to tell us that when people die here from poisonous gas, they die following the laws of our country! In other words, these poisonous gases will effect the lives of people in those countries according to the laws there. This statement clearly indicates the American attitude toward people in other countries. The people of the Third World, where they make millions of dollars, are nothing more than guinea pigs to them. Statistics show that in 1980 the six companies making pesticides (Occidental Petroleum, Dow Chemical, Union Carbide, Monsanto and I.C.I.) sold pesticides worth \$575 million (courtesy FORTUNE). Union Carbide alone did business worth over \$9.99 million in Third World countries. This amount has been steadily increasing even though company officials claim they are losing money in Bhopal. Why were they trying to please the state bureaucracy and to what purpose? Actually, the United States is using the Third World for experimentation. The nuclear waste that U.S. citizens do not want dumped for fear of death is dumped in Africa and the Third World countries that have borrowed money from the United States on easy terms. These countries are aware that they are sitting on volcanos, but they have their backs against wall.

Some Indian people also think that some powers were trying to find out how such a gas leak can be used in war. It was no accident that scientists and technicians from the Western world filled up the city under the guise of helping

the injured. They were helping, but they were also collecting data and analyzing results. Educated people were wary of their presence in Bhopal. We wonder at all this. It is a known fact that labor is cheap in the Third World countries. A job that takes hundreds of dollars or cannot be completed because of the risks involved can be done for a few dollars in these poor countries. It does not matter how a person's health is affected. Such dangerous plants are "donated" to the Third World as gifts demonstrating technical and scientific progress. We hope that the Indian Government will seriously examine the problem of pollution in order to protect its citizens.

But who will examine these factors? Industry in the private as well as the public sector is very lax about environmental pollution. In Madhya Pradesh itself, Orient Paper Mills dumps chemical waste into the Saun River. As a result, cattle in Shehdol district suffer from a sickness never heard of before. People who made a living catching fish in that river are suffering badly; there are no fish left for them to catch and sell. In Mandsore, the prevalence of such dangerous diseases as silicosis is mentioned in connection with slate factories.

All the government does is take some temporary and unsatisfactory measures. As soon as they get out of beautiful New Delhi, railroad passengers have to cover their noses to protect themselves from the stench in Ghaziabad. How can the inhabitants of that city bear this chemical stench? We do not need a scientist to analyze its effect on their health. Gwalior Rayon has badly polluted the Chaliari River in Kerala and the Nagda River in Madhya Pradesh. Passing those rivers is a revelation. Nobody, however, dares to take any action against the owners of this mill. Everything is taken care of on paper. Goa's Juary Agro Chemicals has done its share of polluting. The poison is spreading slowly everywhere, but we just remain patient!

If the industrialists of our country learn a lesson from the vast destruction of life in Bhopal, our country will benefit. We have no guarantee that such mass murders will not happen again if our industry chooses to neglect this lesson. Is it not necessary for all our countrymen to think about this issue?

7997

CSO: 4624/3

INDIA

BORDER FORCES COMBAT SMUGGLING IN THAR DESERT

New Delhi PATRIOT in English 9 Jan 85 p 9

[Text] Barmer, Jan 8 (UNI)—The vast Thar desert in Rajasthan on the Indo-Pakistan border seems to be devoid of life at night.

But slowly, silent shadows emerge from behind the dunes. They are smugglers, bringing in a load of electronic goods, cloth and an assortment of items like cigarettes laden on camels.

Suddenly, a Border Security Force patrol appears on the scene and the smugglers take to their heels leaving the booty behind.

The BSF, watchdogs of India's borders, patrol almost 500 km of the arid landscape. They also keep a special watch on border villages, often the base of many smugglers.

Smuggling from Pakistan to India and vice-versa continues through various points in the sector, BSF and civil officials confessed.

A BSF report says that it foiled more than 100 smuggling attempts along the Indo-Pakistan border last December and seized goods worth Rs 50 lakh.

BSF maintains strict vigil to check the smuggling, but according to one official "it is difficult to seal every inch of the border" because of the vastness of the area.

BSF sends patrol parties — camel and foot patrol — to smuggling-prone points daily to curb the menace. It also gets help from the State police, but keeping in view the rough terrain, hazardous conditions and desert problems the para-military forces are put to a hard task.

The smugglers take tea, bidi, silver and cattle from India and bring cloth and other items from Pakistan. The goods are brought to the villages from various parts of the State and are carried across to Pakistan, mainly during the night.

Informed sources said some village chiefs, involved in the illegal operations, earn several thousand of rupees. They said the BSF had established observation and outposts all along the border to keep a round-the-clock watch and also introduced night vision systems. Patrol parties also move along the border at the zero-line.

The officials criticised the Pakistani authorities for not taking adequate measures to curb smuggling. The goods from Pakistan are brought to Jodhpur on camels and mules and then transported to Surat, Bombay and other cities in trucks.

Confirming that smuggling was also carried on Punjab, a BSF official said 14 kg of heroin and 185 kg of charas, valued at Rs 50 lakh were seized from Ferozepur sector on 11 December.

He said the encounter took place on the Punjab border, where troops lying in ambush challenged the miscreants coming in from Pakistan. The smugglers fired at the ambush party and abandoned their load and escaped.

Similarly, it seized a huge quantity of arms and ammunition in the area, including pistols and 12-bore cartridges, he said.

CSO: 5350/0015

IRAN

DEPUTY MINISTER DISCUSSES FARM POLICIES, OTHER ISSUES

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Dec 84 p 2

[Interview with Eng Jalal Rasul-Af, deputy minister of agriculture for farming affairs, 25 Dec 84, place not specified]

[Text] We had 100,000 more tons of rice production during the current year than last year. Also 30,000 tons of pesticides of the 37,000 tons needed were produced domestically. The price of carded cotton was increased 10 rials in order to support and encourage farmers.

In a press and radio-television interview yesterday, Eng Jalal Rasul-Af, deputy minister of agriculture for farming affairs, made information available to the media concerning the actions, policies, duties and difficulties of the farming affairs ministerial branch.

According to the report of KEYHAN's economic correspondent, he first pointed to the goals being pursued by the farming affairs ministerial branch, and said: In the first phase our most important goals are supplying food-stuffs needed by our society and raw materials needed by industry, the improvement of rural income and raising the general level of the rural economy. Other goals are the utilization of water and soil for agricultural production, special support for basic crops such as wheat, cotton, sugar cane, animal fodder and grains, supplying resources for exporting surplus crop production, organizing units to establish a planting system by means of support, guidance and technical supervision, basic attention to dry farming of wheat and cereals, and the use of agricultural water to irrigate crops needing more water.

Other goals are the use of lands which can produce two crops a year, and in some places three crops and the combining of stock-raising and agriculture which can be profitable for the farmer. Other goals include use of the latest methods to fight plant blights, setting crop prices that will support farmers and create a reasonable income for them, and the expansion of crop insurance which can create the necessary motivation and confidence in agriculture. This division of the ministry is also pursuing the goals of expanding agricultural promotion, the packaging and storing of crops, the implementation of special purpose plans in various areas, the expansion of mechanization, and promotional and instructional efforts.

Pointing to the actions of the ministry taken to increase production and the level of cultivation, he said: During the last farming year we had observable progress in crops like wheat, barley, and cotton, and despite a drought we purchased about 1.25 million tons of wheat from farmers. We produced 200,000 more tons of barley than last year. As for rice, 84,000 hectares were under cultivation, and in Gilan, Mazandaran and Khuzestan we produced about 100,000 tons more than last year. This level of production can be effective in reducing rice imports and conserves 40 million dollars of the country's foreign currency. Due to coordination to increase mechanization and to fight blights that took place in cotton farming we added 30,000 hectares to the cultivated area. This resulted in increasing production by 300 kilograms [as written]. This increased production can conserve about 40 million dollars spent on imports.

Rasul-Af added: In light of the daily increasing production of cotton, we plan to export about 15,000 to 20,000 tons of carded cotton this year. We are planting two crops of clover a year in Gilan and Mazandaran. This year the level under cultivation reached 20,000 hectares, from which about 200,000 tons of dry fodder can be harvested. After the rice harvest clover is planted in the same soil without any plowing or other operation. Thus after the rice harvest the clover seeds are sown, and it is mown several times until the following year's rice planting. In addition to producing fodder this plan's implementation also raises soil quality. In the five-year plan this plan will expand to 50,000 hectares.

The deputy ministry of agriculture for farming then pointed to the shortage and artificial high cost of potatoes, and said: The potato crop was good this year and about 1.6 million tons of potatoes were harvested. Since the production of potatoes was sufficient, this shortage and high price is nothing other than the result of hoarding by speculators and opportunists. Concerning the Colorado beetle sickness which is a blight dangerous to potato farms, he said: Fortunately we were able to suppress this blight fully through equipping teams to fight it. In fact, by spraying the potato fields we were also able to improve the crops. Furthermore, the following actions were taken to fight other blights: 469,000 hectares were treated against the wheat aphid; 717,000 hectares treated against the stalk-worm; 234,000 hectares against the desert mouse; 88,000 hectares against locusts; 433 hectares against the cotton blight; and 14,000 hectares against the Colorado beetle.

He added: As for chemical fertilizer imports, efforts have been made to reduce imports. During the first nine months of the year we imported about 1.2 million tons of chemical fertilizer, and the total for the year will reach 1.8 million tons. Last year, however, we imported 2 million tons.

We imported 37,000 tons of pesticide, but fortunately we produced 30,000 tons domestically. We hope that by next year we will produce the country's entire needs domestically. This production and self-sufficiency will conserve about 30 million dollars of the country's foreign currency.

Regarding the plan for crop insurance, the deputy minister of agriculture for farming said: This year the regulations to insure the two crops of cotton and beets will be put into effect. In the following year insurance will be put into effect gradually for other crop including wheat, soybeans, and rice.

He said: Recently the Supreme Agricultural Council approved legislation to increase the price of carded cotton by 10 rials in order to support the cotton farmers. Furthermore, we are planning prizes for cotton export in order to encourage exports. As for sugar beet, a plan of the Economic Council is under implementation which includes an increase in beets and also supplies beet farmers with seed, fertilizer, and pesticide in order to encourage the crop. A mechanization plan for about 50,000 hectares is being implemented through the cooperation of the Ministry of Agriculture and sugar factories. This plan will be instructive in furthering mechanization in planting, growing and harvesting. The apple crop exceeded domestic consumption by 500,000 tons and we also have a surplus of citrus fruits this year which can be exported. We have a 300,000 ton surplus of grapes. He then pointed to the shortages and insufficiencies in the storage and cold storage areas, and said: Due to a lack of store houses, 300,000 to 400,000 tons of our potato crop go to waste. If this amount were offered in the form of potato chips, etc., it would make a noticeable difference in the country's economy. In conclusion, Rasul-Af pointed to the shortage of chemical paper and the level of this goods' import and said: We have announced the need for about 1,400 tons this year, of which about 105 tons has already been imported and distributed to consumers, while another 200 tons is currently being imported. We are advising orchard owners to use chemical solutions to fight orange and fruit infections.

9597

CSO: 4640/247

IRAN

VELAYATI PRAISES EFFORTS OF GENDARMERIE

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 22 Dec 84 p 22

[Text] In a meeting Thursday with officials of the gendarmerie of the Islamic Republic, the prime minister referred to the generous aid of the world oppressors to the Ba'th regime of Iraq and said: "While continuing the victorious war, we have been able without other's help to repay our loans and take long strides towards our independence." The commanders of the gendarmerie departments, the director of the ideology and political offices of the Islamic Republic gendarmerie, the director of political ideology, Hojjat ol Eslam Ashtiani, and Colonel Kuchekzadeh, general commander of the gendarmerie of the Islamic Republic were present at this meeting.

First Colonel Kuchekzadeh presented a report about the successful operations of this force in the first nine months of the current year. Then Hojjat ol Eslam Ashtiani talked about the activities of the ideology and political offices of the gendarmerie. Following that, Mr Hoseyn Musavi, the prime minister, in his speech praised the efforts of the commanders and the staff of the Islamic Republic Gendarmerie in their fight against world oppression and to safeguard the independence and national security and said: "The Islamic revolution has made the most fundamental changes in our country which have laid the groundwork for basic changes in the direction and policies of different organizations. What helps in this fundamental conversion is the change of the previous order replacing it with the rules and new objectives based on the aims of the Islamic order instead of the rules and conception of the previous regime. Parallel to proceeding towards a unanimous direction between different departments including the military and disciplinary forces, these organizations have met daily with the increasing support and gratitude of the people." The prime minister added: "We believe in the sovereignty of nations and their interests and our policies in the region are against the interests and desires of the superpowers. In the execution of these policies we rely only on the people's determination and the Islamic Republic's organizations are the people's natural armed, defense, and executive forces. The Arab countries in the last five months alone have put five billion dollars credit at the disposal of the aggressor regime of Iraq and it is not clear when Iraq will be able to repay that. Whereas while continuing the victorious war, we have been able to repay our foreign loans without getting any aid from others and have taken long strides towards our independence." The prime

minister said: "Today there are some nations in Latin America whose annual loan interest to the United States alone is equal to our oil income. As a result, their governments are under the influence of United States power and they cannot even breath without the permission of the United States." He added: "Annual inflation in these countries is over 200 percent according to world statistics. Without referring to this figure, the statistics of the world oppressor's mass media regularly refer to the 12.8 percent inflation in Iran and try to portray this figure as immense for a nation at war."

Engineer Musavi also said: "Today our Islamic Republic and the gendarmerie department has resisted the agents of the world oppressors and international criminals and we call this department one of the people's arms. Therefore the people's interest in the gendarmerie and the support of its different forces in different parts is increasing daily. Today the cultural growth of the people and especially their mental change and attitude in the villages is completely apparent. These changes are also clear in other organizations and offices. These are also from the blessing of Islam."

In concluding he said: "The existence of political, ideological, and humanizing commands are an important movement by the gendarmerie in unanimous direction with the people. The gendarmerie commanders recognize themselves as the servants of the people and this is very important in the gendarmerie's success. The Islamic Republic gendarmerie gradually will realize its sensitive position. The role of this force in protecting and providing peace especially in Kurdistan and Western Azarbaijan and also the around-the-clock efforts of the gendarmerie in the eastern border of the country against international criminals who intend to suppress our system through addicts and other similar things, along with the corps forces, committees and other humane forces deserves appreciation."

9815

CSO: 4640/231

IRAN

IRAN TO PROVIDE 70 PERCENT OF SIERRA LEONE'S OIL NEEDS

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Dec 84 p 3

[Text] Yesterday morning, a delegation from Sierra Leone led by Dr Sheka Kanu, minister of foreign affairs, left Tehran after a two day visit to Iran and meetings with our country's high ranking authorities. Dr 'Ali Akbar Velayati, minister of foreign affairs, and 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, acting deputy foreign minister and general director for Asian and Arab affairs, saw Dr Kanu off at Tehran airport.

At the airport Sheka Kanu spoke concerning his visit to Iran, and said: During our stay in Tehran we met with the president, the speaker of the Majlis, the prime minister, the minister of foreign affairs, and the Minister of Petroleum's deputy minister for international affairs, and examined ways to expand and strengthen bilateral relations. We also discussed existing means of economic, cultural and political cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sierra Leone.

He added: Sierra Leone possesses rich mineral resources, and we intend to carry out mineral trade between the two countries. We also had discussions in this regard.

Dr Kanu said: We also had conversations concerning the Iran-Iraq war and these discussions gave me the opportunity to obtain more information on the war and to bring myself up to date on the war situation.

Sierra Leone's foreign minister added: An opportunity arose during the trip to discuss assistance from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Sierra Leone. The Islamic Republic of Iran agreed to supply about 70 percent of our petroleum needs. The petroleum contract between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sierra Leone ended last December and it is now planned to conclude a new contract between the two countries in the next month.

In conclusion he said: I was impressed by seeing Iran's great and ancient cities and meetings with Iranian officials were instructive.

He expressed hope that the two countries' discussions would continue when Dr Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, visited Sierra Leone.

It should be noted that at the conclusion of the visit of Dr Kanu, Sierra Leone's foreign minister, a joint statement was issued simultaneously in Tehran and Freetown.

IRAN

STEPS FOR ISLAMIC GOVERNMENT IN IRAQ REPORTEDLY UNDERWAY

Tehran SOBH-E AZADEGAN in Persian 4 Dec 84 p 15

[Text] At a press conference held in Tehran on the occasion of the Seminar for Islamic Cadres in Iraq and in the presence of the domestic and foreign press, the speaker of the Supreme Assembly for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI] delineated the role of the Islamic Revolution cadres in Iraq in the Islamic future of that country and explained the present situation in Iraq.

Seyyed Mahmud Hasherni, the Speaker of SAIRI, who was answering questions from reporters and the representatives of the domestic and foreign media yesterday morning at Esteqlal Hotel in Tehran made these remarks about the personages attending the first seminar for the Islamic cadres in Iraq:

Four hundred members of Iraq's Islamic Revolution cadres who are among the most orthodox Iraqi personages and who are struggling in various countries of the world to establish an Islamic Government in Iraq took part in this seminar."

Referring to the productive results of the seminar which in three days of morning and afternoon sessions had considered the various dimensions of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, the Speaker of SAIRI stated, "This seminar is rightfully considered as one of the assets of the oppressed nation of Iraq, and the presence of the distinguished Iraqi Muslim personages at this seminar is a reflection of the nerve of the people of Iraq and their interest in Islam."

With respect to the issues considered at the seminar, Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi stated that the course of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq and the future of the beloved country of Iraq - which has fallen victim to oppressors and satonic elements - was one of the most significant subjects discussed and evaluated.

He announced that the concluding report of the seminar will be published in a detailed communique during the closing ceremonies; and this communique will reflect our rightful position regarding the problems in Iraq.

The Speaker of SAIRI stated that parts of the issues discussed at this seminar - especially aspects relating to the future of the Islamic Revolution

in Iraq - will be among the confidential documents of the seminar and will not be made public due to the present predicament of the Iraqi Muslim Mojahedin.

Pointing to the positive effects of the decisions of the seminar upon furthering within the soil of Iraq the activities of the Islamic Revolution Cadres in Iraq, Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi addressed the Iraqi Muslims residing abroad and reiterated that, "The people of Iraq expect you to make known to the world their fight and to paralyze the propaganda censorship that rules Iraq by publicizing their crusade."

He specified that in reality this seminar is the reflection of some aspects of the Islamic uprising by the oppressed nation of Iraq.

The speaker of SAIRI referred to the recent border unrest between Kuwait and Iraq as a contrived act - to be considered an introduction to a border agreement between the two countries.

In reply to a reporter's question concerning SAIRI's position on the resumption of open diplomatic relations between America and Iraq, he remarked that "in our opinion, the relations between America and the damnable regime of Iraq was never interrupted to be resumed again; rather, at this stage the relationship is made public due to the present situation of the Iraqi regime."

He further added, "disclosure of this relationship is an indication of the political and military defeat of Saddam's regime and this regime's ever increasing dependence on the great Satan of America. Hojjat ol-Eslam Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi explained, "This relationship has disclosed to all the free people of the world the true nature of the Saddam regime and its empty anti-imperialist and anti-Zionist slogans.

The speaker of SAIRI noted, "As underscored by the Seminar for Islamic cadres in Iraq, the fight against Saddam's regime is not confined to the ranks of the Islamic Mojahedin of Iraq; rather, the battle field is in readiness for all those who are prepared to participate devotedly in this movement which is favored by God.

Emphasizing the necessity for greater cooperation and unity among all opposition forces interested in the destiny of the Islamic people of Iraq, he demanded that they all join the Mojahedin of Iraq in their efforts to save the Muslim nation of Iraq.

Regarding the activities of the Muslim Mojahedin of Iraq, Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi emphasized that through the efforts of the fighting Iraqi Muslims, the decrepit regime of Saddam has been dealt heavy blows.

Citing the relentless campaign by the Muslim people of Iraq against the government of Saddam, he said that the Muslim Mojahedin have a long road ahead toward destroying the ruling regime in Iraq - a road which they will pursue with complete strength and constancy.

The speaker of SAIRI pronounced as natural all differences of opinion among different fighting Muslim groups of Iraq and said, "These differences are very superficial and confined to differences in approach toward the campaign and shall never endanger the speed of the movement."

He emphasized that though the duty of SAIRI is only to administer the affairs of the Islamic Revolution until the fall of Saddam's regime, this assembly will follow the establishment of the future Islamic Government and the administration of affairs in Iraq through a variety of committees.

In connection with the possibility of replacing Saddam with another individual he said that changing of government officials by America assisted by some government authorities in the region will have no influence upon the will of the Iraqi nation in their efforts to destroy the Ba'th regime of Saddam; and the movement of the Islamic nation of Iraq - boiling over with enthusiasm - shall continue with the establishment of an Islamic government in that country.

The speaker of SAIRI stated that "we shall utilize the capabilities and talents of the Islamic Revolution cadres in Iraq in establishing the future Islamic Majlis in that country, and God willing they shall become the founders of this Majlis."

Pointing to the cooperation of some Iraqi Muslim Kurds toward advancing the goals of SAIRI, he emphasized the necessity for expanding such cooperations and remarked that SAIRI welcomes those who are prepared to serve devotedly and actively in the campaign against the government of Saddam. Seyyed Mahmud Hashemi praised the role that the Islamic Revolution of Iran has played in expanding Islamic ideas in the Kurdistan region of Iraq and expressed his appreciation to Muslim Kurds of Iraq for rejecting anti-religious ideas. With respect to the latter efforts, he mentioned the efforts by the Kurdish Muslim theologians in guiding the Kurds of Iraq toward preserving interests of Islam and said that SAIRI enjoys the cooperation of certain groups among racial and religious minorities in Iraq - a fact which fails the conspiracies of the enemies of Islam.

Regarding the status of theological centers in Iraq, Mr Hashemi stated, "The Saddam regime after martyring Ayatollah Seyyed Mohammad Baqer Sadar has taken away the possibility for any and all Islamic activities within the theological centers in Iraq. To defy Islam, it has decided to destroy all of the theological centers founded by the Martyr Sadar so that there are no centers of opposition and crusade in Iraq - capable of fighting against the oppression of Saddam's regime."

He added, "There are now valiant, crusading and capable theologians and clergymen in Iraq who continue with their roles in informing, guiding, and giving support to the Muslim Mojahedin of Iraq despite the great pressure of the ruling regime. He cited the martyrdom of Iraqi theologians - among them Ayatollah Seyyed Qasem Shir, who is more than one hundred years old, as an example of the crusade by the Muslim theologians of Iraq."

IRAN

OPPOSITION PAPER DENOUNCES 'ALL TYPES OF THEOCRATIC REGIMES'

Paris NEHZAT in Persian 13 Dec 84 pp 1-2

[Paris NEHZAT in Persian; biweekly organ of the Iran National Resistance Movement.]

[Text] We have revealed the terroristic essence of the Islamic regime of Ayatollah Khomeyni before for those who believe the theologians' regime. We have revealed the instigation and vindictiveness of the mullahs in the destruction, massacre, bombing or mining of public places and public water lines, hijackings and similar things which resulted in the vain killing of innocent people. We have emphasized repeatedly the distinguished speciality of this regime. Therefore we have to reiterate and add that terrorism is the fundamental style of every populist regime. The durability of such regimes is necessarily based on terror and using force on the people. Since according to law, healthy international relations are generally based on respect for treaties, accords, and pacts between nations, no populist regime is able to achieve desired stability and continue to govern.

This possibility is undoubtedly anticipated so that terroristic regimes always take advantage of political and economic contradictions or the inadequacy of the military and international politics to keep the leverage of their power for a limited time. But since these regimes are never supported by internal forces or stable international support, they are not able to continue their position and sooner or later they are doomed to fall and be annihilated.

We take this occasion to look at last week's news and evaluate the Tehran regime from this point of view. During the past week, another harrowing event of terroristic nature in the history of the world occurred with the hijacking of the commercial Kuwaiti airline and the torture and massacre of its innocent passengers. It is clear that Khomeyni's regime has been involved in this event.

The unprecedented calamity occurred at Tehran's Mehrabad airport on the pretext of the financial aid of the Kuwaiti government to Iraq and for the release of the prisoners condemned for the attack, destruction and massacre

at the U.S. embassy in Kuwait. The news of this event, from the torture of the passengers, the trampling of an American passenger, the amputation of the finger of another passenger, the news of the one-by-one killing of the passengers, and even the echo of the begging lament of a Kuwaiti victim and the volley of the final shot at this passenger shocked the world's mass media. On the other hand, the Islamic Jihad organization connected to Ayatollah Khomeyni's regime praised the hijackers and their coolness and bravery. We know this news, followed by the news of the conduct of the Khomeyni regime officials made the international Red Cross recall their representatives from the Ayatollah's republic and declare an obvious breach of the Geneva convention and related treaties by the regime.

The purpose of reviewing this tragic event is to present more proof of the international relations of this regime. Also we reiterate that a terrorist regime is never able to change its essence since if its essential nature changes, the regime will dissolve immediately.

During the same week we saw the waves of protests and strikes filling sensitive political and economic centers. The related news of these events shows the harsh tone in the people's protests and the depth of the public's hatred for the Ayatollah's regime. Although the extent of the strikes at the Esfahan Iron Foundry and other industrial complexes were limited, in the short life of the regime they must be seen as the first wave of obvious and organized protest. Additionally the news from Tehran indicates the proper protest of the people, bloody confrontations with disciplinary forces (revolutionary guards) and a few instances of local fires. Similar incidents have occurred in other big cities and undoubtedly these protests indicate the deep hatred of the people for the regime. This burst of anger is what we have heard the people humming for months in line to get their necessities and in public places like movie theatres, restaurants, stadiums, taxis, and the streets. In short, Ayatollah Khomeyni's regime does not have any firm internal humane base. In connection with the mentioned news, some politicians believe that the events of the recent week were instigated by the interference of internal anti-regime elements by taking advantage of public hatred both inside and outside in order to eliminate the extremist radical faction so that moderate theocrats could take power. This assumption raises the question: 'Is arousing people to revolt in order to eliminate part of the regime, controllable?'

In our view, the answer to this question is negative since the people of Iran have felt the loss resulting from theocratic power and perhaps have paid the heaviest penalty in history and will not approve of any religious government, extremist or moderate. If our nation revolted against the previous regime, their principal goal was to acquire freedom and the right to national sovereignty. During the government of Dr Bakhtiar these desires became reality until anti-nationalist factions and deceitful and fraudulent agents solicited Ayatollah Khomeyni; that doesn't mean that the nation was asking for theocratic rule. The Iranian nation's insurrection did not confirm its subordination. However this revolt expresses its political maturity. This is the very same nation which paid a high price for its experience that has penalized its life, wealth, pride and heritage. That is why we heartily believe such a nation will revolt against the dictatorship of theocrats and will not surrender until it attains its final demands.

IRAN

TWO THOUSAND LOW-COST HOUSING UNITS, HOSPITALS TO BE BUILT FOR WORKERS

Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 30 Dec 84 p 2

[Text] Due to the utilization of the cash and income of the Social Security Organization, the organization's capital has risen from 80 billion rials to 480 billion following the victory of the Islamic revolution. In an interview with IRNA, Eng Najafi, the deputy for capital investment of the social security organization, announced the above facts and said: Prior to the revolution the total income of this organization was about 7 billion rials, while after the revolution it has reached 67 billion rials.

He said that one of the reasons for this movement towards investing capital in production and service centers was the inadequacy of the insurance payments to insured persons, and said: The Social Security Organization's employees' salary come from profits made on capital investment and in no way do we make use of insurance payments to insured persons. He said that the organization's plans include bank partnerships and the construction of low-cost housing for factory workers, and said: So far one thousand low-cost housing units have been built for workers and have been placed at their disposal. About two thousand more units are under construction. The organization also intends to build several clinics and hospitals and to train technicians in the health field.

Najafi added: The files of insured persons are stored in the memory of the limited computer system possessed by the Social Security Organization. In order to facilitate offering services to insured individuals, the latter's close cooperation with the organizations' branches is of the greatest necessity. He requested insured persons to contact service centers in order to obtain services and to present all documents relating to their prior insurance claims so that no benefits would be lost. Presenting statistics on insured persons and pensioners. he said: At the present time there are 1,973,456 persons in 214,244 workshops with insurance coverage from the Social Security Organization. Insurance benefits are provided for job-related accidents, illness, workman's compensation, retirement, absences, and assistance to newlyweds. Asked whether the Social Security Organization did not intend to increase the quality of health care to insured persons, he said: All treatment problems concern the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health must investigate the issue of whether services rendered by the Social Security Organization to insured persons are negligible and inadequate.

9597

CSO: 4640/245

IRAN

BRIEFS

FREEDOM FOR PRISONERS--Yesterday evening Ayatollah Musavi-Ardabili met with a group of personnel from the Tehran Islamic Revolution Public Prosecutor's Office and a group of employees from the Qazalhesar Prison. Expressing his appreciation for the efforts by prison officials and employees towards reforming prisoners, he stressed: It is better to release as quickly as possible those prisoners whose release presents no problems. The chief justice of the Supreme Court also said: Although it is necessary today to deal harshly with infidels, atheists, and hypocrites, it is necessary to release that group of prisoners who are ashamed of their actions and in whom we have confidence that they will no longer take up their former actions, even though they are not correct and reliable Muslims. In the meeting, Ayatollah Musavi-Ardabili stressed the necessity of strictly following prison laws in dealing with prisoners and completely obeying Islamic morals and standards in the prisons and added: You should treat prisoners in such a way that when they come out of prison they will be completely reformed and not, God forbid, indignant about actions they suffered at our hands. [Text] [Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 26 Dec 84 p 1]

9597
CSO: 4640/245

PAKISTAN

FORMER MINISTER ATTACKS BANKING SYSTEM, TERMS IT 'UN-ISLAMIC'

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 2

[Text] Lahore, Jan 19--In a stinging critique of the "system introduced by the government under the name of Islamic banking," Mr Mubashir Hasan, the former Finance Minister, has said here that it was "neither Islamic nor banking."

Addressing a press conference at his Gulberg residence Saturday morning, Dr Hasan said the new system was not Islamic because the workers who created wealth had been kept out of the profit-sharing mechanism. "Those who deposit money with the banks and those who borrow from them, along with the banks themselves, have been made beneficiaries of the profits accruing from the labour of the working classes who will have to continue to make do with a pittance as before."

Dr Hasan said everyone had been considered eligible for a share in profits except those who created wealth by the sweat of their brow. This amounted to "Islamisation of exploitation," he added. Hitherto the workers had been exploited under capitalism. No previous government, "such of them as we have had, ever tried to give this extortion the cover of Islam. Now it is proposed to openly exploit the workers in the name of our faith," Dr Hasan charged.

To rename "interest" "profit" and charge 15 per cent was blatantly un-Islamic. In the productive process, a gift of two to three per cent for the investor could, perhaps, be appropriate, but here a system was being introduced under which an investor would more than double his capital every five years, while the workers would continue to get the same wages which, because of inflation, would actually fall in real terms. "The worker will have no share in the profit he is creating--and all this in the name of Islam," Dr Hasan remonstrated.

The former Finance Minister said he was certain that under Islamic laws banks were positively forbidden from apportioning part of the profit for themselves. One could understand if the profit was divided between a factory-owner and other bank depositors, provided there was a share in it for the workers. The bank itself could at most charge expense; it was not entitled to a share, because if a bank demanded a cut in profits,

it would become a commission agent in financial transactions which was not permissible in Islam. Banking had come to occupy an honoured place in capitalism which the proposed system would prostitute.

Dr Hasan said that if strictly followed, Islamic laws made both interest and profit-based banking impermissible. No matter what the arrogant thought, Islam did not permit falsehood and banking was based on the lie that depositors could get all their money back on demand. For instance, if the citizens had deposited ten thousand million rupees with a bank which in turn had lent out three thousand million, it could obviously not pay its depositors all their money at one go. Nevertheless, every bank promised "money back on demand," Dr Hasan argued.

The new procedure announced by the government incorporated some features of the old interest-based system. For instance, the credit given for the purchase of machinery had been retained. Only the interest payable on such credit would now be called rental. According to the circles concerned, most of the banking transactions would be under Mazarba (mark-ups), Musharka (profit-loss sharing) and Bei-ussalam (part payment on demand and part later). The powers that be thought that giving the price or rent of borrowing money an Arabic name would change the nature of interest. This and innumerable other subterfuges abounded in the history of Islam. Between the second and sixth centuries after Hijra "official Muftis" had pronounced interest in many shapes as lawful under various names. But in every age, righteous Ulema had always condemned this revisionism. Explaining, Dr Hasan said: "Let us suppose Zaid goes to Omer and requests a thousand-rupee loan on twenty per cent interest for a year, and the latter says that he won't charge interest but will buy his table for the money required, provided the former buys it back from him after a year for Rs 1,200. In this manner, the man wanting credit will get the money, the money-lender will get his interest, and the table will like where it was a year ago."

The flight of capital would take place at a greater pace than ever before and the small trader and manufacturer would be given the short shrift. The small borrowers would find it difficult to find credit. Private money-lending business would flourish. And all this, Dr Hasan forecast, would lead to a rapid deterioration in the state of the economy, which in turn would have an adverse effect on national politics "because backward areas will become more backward and regional disparities will increase."

When asked what he thought the motives of the authors of the new system were, Dr Hasan said, "They have no motive. It is just another gimmick... Words have been debased and degraded out of recognition. They use the word "Iqra" (read). The word "election" no longer means what it should, nor "referendum," nor banking. Banking will take place in camera, and managers will rule the roost. The government will now become a party to exploitation and there won't be man alive in Pakistan, workers and peasants excluded, part of whose earnings will not be illegal (in the eyes of Islam). Not that this is not the case today. But the scale will now be unprecedented."

When a newsman asked whether he would be taking part in the elections, Dr Hasan snapped: "Don't be stupid. Talk some sense."

Another newsman asked whether he could offer a remedy for improving the economic situation. "I am not offering any solutions, but let those who have landed us in this mess relinquish office," he replied.

CSO: 4600/245

PAKISTAN

FORMER PPP LEGISLATORS NOT TO TAKE PART IN ELECTIONS

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 3

[Text] Faisalabad, Jan 19--Many former MNAs and MPAs of the defunct Pakistan People's Party who have been declared eligible to contest the elections are still not willing to participate in them unless they are held on party basis under 1973 Constitution.

The correspondent contacted five such ex MNAs and MPAs and none of them except Mr Khalid Malik, former provincial Minister, expressed willingness to take part in the elections. These included Chaudhry Talib Hussain, ex-MNA and provincial minister; Ch. Mohammad Afzal Hasan Randhawa, ex-MNA; Mian Ihsan-ul-Haq, ex-MNA and Capt (retd) Nasir Akbar, ex-MNA from Faisalabad. Capt Nasir Akbar is out of the country for the last two weeks in connection with his business affairs and according to his relatives and friends the question of his applying for eligibility to contest elections did not rise.

As far as Khalid Malik, former Punjab Minister was concerned, he had already been expelled by the party high command in August 1983 for non-participation in the MRD movement. Chaudhry Khurshid Ahmed, a spokesman of PPP, Faisalabad, when contacted by this correspondent maintained that not a single PPP office-bearer or former MNAs, and MPAs would be taking part in the present elections from Faisalabad and anybody so doing would be expelled from the party.

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PAKISTAN

MRD STATES TERMS FOR PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, Jan 19--The MRD at its Central Committee meeting held on Saturday at Abbottabad decided not to participate in any elections which are not held according to the 1973 Constitution and under the election rules in force on July 4, 1977.

Malik Mohammad Qasim, the MRD Convener, briefing the newsmen after the conclusion of the two day meeting of the Central Committee said that the 11-party alliance had been constantly demanding the holding of election but it was opposed to the forthcoming elections which he described as a "hoax," because according to him the whole exercise was aimed at self-perpetuation and was in utter violation of the 1973 Constitution which "is the anchor of Pakistan's national solidarity and integrity."

He said the MRD felt that "if the regime is genuinely interested in holding elections then it should release all political prisoners, students, labourers, teachers, journalists, lawyers and remove curbs on the Press and all other curbs on the political parties and political activities."

Most of all, he said, it must dismantle military courts and restore the power and independence of judiciary and it must create a proper atmosphere for fair and impartial elections under the 1973 Constitution and the rules as existed on July 4, 1977.

Malik Qasim warned that if an election was held under any other manner the MRD "shall not accept the results of such an election," and "it shall endeavour and struggle for the removal of the Martial Law."

He said after the removal of martial law the MRD would stand committed to "form a caretaker government for 120 days which will hold elections under the 1973 Constitution and July 4, 1977 election rules within a period of 120 days."

Malik Qasim said that the MRD warned all those who intend taking part in the "so-called elections under the President's announcement of January 12, 1985 that by participating in such an election they would be subverting the Constitution."

He said that the MRD component parties decided to expel all those members who filed nomination papers in the forthcoming elections.

Malik Qasim said that the MRD Central Committee would meet again at Lahore on January 22 and 23 to continue its discussions and observe the developing political situation in the country.

He hoped that Mr Palejo, Mr Mairaj Mohammad Khan and Mr Fazil Raho would be able to attend the next MRD meeting if they were released.

Malik Qasim appealed to the people on behalf of the MRD not to participate in any elections which were not held as envisaged in the 1973 Constitution and under the election rules in force on July 4, 1977.

He said that the nation boycotted the referendum as a result of MRD appeal and the polling stations throughout the country were a deserted look on December 19, 1984.

He said the maximum turnout at the referendum was no more than five percent.

He said the people understandably did not show any enthusiasm for the elections as announced on January 12, 1985 and no nomination papers were filed on the first two days.

Consequently, he added, the regime was "unnerved and it beat a hasty retreat and removed the ban on the participation of the political leaders and workers in the elections through two or three consecutive announcements."

He said another reason for removing the ban was to entice the "political turncoats to take part in the sham-elections."

Permanent Structure

Malik Qasim said that it had unanimously been decided that the MRD would now have a permanent structure.

He said it was also decided to revive the committee which was formed some time ago to bring about a consensus among the component parties of the MRD with regard to provincial autonomy and distribution of powers between the provinces and the centre.

He further said that after the consensus has been reached "we shall make it public and make a commitment if any party came to legislative power after the elections held under the 1973 Constitution and the election rules of July 4, 1977 it would be committed to bring about the changes in the Constitution in accordance with the decisions already taken by MRD on this question."

Unanimous

The atmosphere at the MRD meeting site on Friday was totally relaxed. Leaders appeared very forthcoming in answering questions posed by the reporters.

Almost all leaders who were asked to comment on the decisions taken by the Central Committee said that the decisions were taken unanimously and felt happy over the outcome of the meeting.

Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, Khan Abdul Wali Khan, Ghulam Mustafa Jatoi and Air Marshal (retd) Asghar Khan were seen explaining to the reporters the salient features of the decisions very patiently and in the spirit of camaraderie.

Mr Jatoi expressed his displeasure over a story in a local newspaper which had alleged that he had met President General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq on the night of Thursday. He was talking in terms of taking legal action against the newspaper, and said it had "indulged in character assassination."

Mr Mahmoodul Haq Usmani, a Karachi leader appeared very happy over the decision of the MRD and said he was "fully satisfied with these decisions."

Malik Qasim said that at Saturday's meeting the MRD decided that all matters pertaining to religion would be referred to the Ulema of the MRD for interpretation.

He said in order to perpetuate his rule, the President "even exploited the fair name of Islam by making it an issue in the referendum."

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PAKISTAN

REACTIONS TO MRD BOYCOTT DECISION REPORTED

Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 10

[Text] Karachi, Jan 19--"Not unexpected" was the common reaction of various political leaders here of the MRD's decision to boycott the February elections.

Sardar Sherbaz Khan Mazari said the MRD being bound by its commitment to the nation, could not possibly have deviated from it.

"Keeping in view the record of the present regime, their continuous reiteration of the Aug 12 Plan and the recent referendum which was held contrary to the spirit of the 1973 Constitution, the MRD had no alternative but to take the stand it did," he remarked.

Prof Ghafoor Ahmad said the Government failed to respond to the conciliatory spirit lately shown by the MRD leaders and on the other hand, directed its efforts towards creating a wedge in the MRD's rank and file.

The election schedule was announced, but the President withheld the question of amendments in the 1973 Constitution and this raised doubts in the eyes of the public, he said.

Now there was dire need for a broad consensus among the political parties so that sanity in the body-politic would be assured, he stressed.

Prof Shah Faridul Haq said the MRD's boycott resolution is theirs; the defunct JUP will not participate in the polls unless they are held on party basis under the 1973 Constitution.

He wondered that when conduct of election campaigns has been allowed on "political basis," what the hitch was in holding elections on the basis of party system.

Mr Musheer Ahmad Peshimam stressed that in the larger national interest the three pre-conditions the MRD has laid down should be conceded.

"Democratic process in its true form has to be allowed in accord with the people's inalienable right to free and fair franchise," he emphasised.

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PAKISTAN

MRD-REGIME IMPASSE PERSISTS

Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 85 p 8

[Article by Nisar Osmani]

[Text]

LAHORE, Jan 20: As feared the political impasse persists and at least in the immediate future there appears to be no meeting ground between the Government and the MRD.

Circles close to the Government maintain that it went out of its way to accommodate the 11-party alliance by lifting the disqualifications which had opened the door for the candidature to an overwhelming majority of the leaders and office-bearers of opposition parties and so the gesture of goodwill should have been reciprocated. They believe that the MRD has lost a great opportunity by spruning a good offer.

The MRD circles, however, argue that the withdrawal of disqualifications was not their but the Government's headache. They believe that by taking these steps the Government had not even touched the tip of the iceberg. They maintain that by expressing their willingness to contest the coming elections under the present laws, they would have

"compromised their principled stance," for which they had been struggling all these years.

According to them, participating in the polls in the given circumstances would mean

(A) Accepting the need for referendum and its results;

(B) Conceding to President Zia-ul-Haq a right to introduce amendments to the Constitution in a manner he chooses, particularly those which would degrade and weaken the next Assembly, reducing it to the status of the present nominated Shoora; and

(C) Being a willing party to the reversal of the political process.

Those who believe that the MRD would have jumped into the fray only if the Government had conceded on the election methodology were sadly mistaken, they contend.

However, the MRD decision must be welcome to two political parties, Jamaat-i-Islami and Muslim League, which have openly announced that they will contest elections, as also the members of

Majlis-i-Shora and independent candidates who have heaved a sigh of relief.

Meanwhile, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, the PDP chief, has challenged the Government's contention that MRD's Saturday's decision amounts to pursuing a policy of confrontation. Reminding that this has been the consistent stand of the alliance, he has pointed out that they had only reminded Gen. Zia-ul-Haq of the pledges he had made to the nation at the time he took over as Chief Martial Law Administrator.

He has regretted that by threatening to ban the proposed meeting at Lahore the Government has only worsened the political atmosphere as the MRD wants to discuss the political situation behind closed doors. He recalls that full political activity was allowed both during the Ayub-Fatima Jinnah contest and the elections held by Gen. Yahya Khan. However, the position today is that "we don't know where our workers are detained."

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PAKISTAN

CHINA'S TRADE CARAVAN ARRIVES

Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 85 Business Supplement p 1

[Text]

GILGIT, Jan 20: An 18-member Chinese trade caravan which is now a days in Gilgit, called on the Commissioner for Northern Area, Mr. Khalid Mahmood Ahmed.

The Chinese trade caravan is led by M. Liang Crengdian.

The Commissioner for Northern Area, who is also the Chairman of the Northern Area Traders Cooperation, welcomed the Chinese guests and wished happiness and comfort for there during their stay in Gilgit.

He asked the General Manager of the Northern Area Traders Cooperative to look after the guests and take them round the city.

Speaking to the Chinese guests, the Commissioner, said that the border trade between the People's Republic of China and Pakistan reflected the friendly and neighbourly relations of the people of both the countries, which will be further strengthened with the passage of time.

He said that the people of Xing-jiang and the Northern Area of Pakistan have deep historical and culturalties and the trade caravans from both sides exchange goods for mutual benefit. These ancient and historical relations have been revived by both the Governments and the exchange of goods through border trade has increased to manifold

during the preceding years, the Commissioner added.

Deep relations

Similar views were expressed by the leader of the Chinese trade caravan.

The Chinese trade caravan arrived at Gilgit by Karakoram Highway via Khunjarab Pass on Saturday.

The caravan will stay in Gilgit upto Jan 25 and will return to Xing-jiang via the same route. A cordial welcome was accorded to the Chinese.

Goods

The Chinese also visited the monument of the Chinese road builders at Dangore, in the vicinity of Gilgit town, who sacrificed their lives during the construction of the Karakoram Highway. They also paid a visit to the monument of the Shuhada of the liberation movement of Northern Area at Chinar Bagh, Gilgit.

The unloading of the Chinese goods started and their sale will start when the prices are fixed. The Chinese goods comprise of cotton clothes, silk cloth, hardware, glassware, agriculture appliances, utensils, crockery and other domestic goods.—PPI.

PAKISTAN

ASIAN LABOR EXPORT SAID DWINDLING

Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 85 Business Supplement p IV

[Article by Abdus Sattar Ghazali]

[Text]

KUWAIT, Jan 20: The boom in the outward flow of migrants from South and South-East Asia is beginning to taper off and in the later half of the eighties, many Asian Governments, including Pakistan, will have to tackle the difficult and delicate problem of absorbing tens of thousands of returning migrants from the oil producing countries of the Middle East.

In a recent article in the International Labour Review, an official of International Labour Office's Asian and Pacific Project for Labour Administration cites an ILO forecast that there could be up to three quarters of a million families with returning migrants in Pakistan alone by the end of this decade.

The report added that because 'out migration' has led to rise in wages, the absorption of returning migrants into gainful employment is likely to be even more difficult.

Skilled workers

The outflow of skilled production workers has also persuaded many Governments to go in for capital intensive, rather than labour intensive, industries with a corresponding construction of job opportunities.

The issue of returning migration, according to the ILO, cannot be divorced from the whole problem of increasing the economy's capacity to absorb people into productive employment.

Special resettlement programmes for returning migrants are unlikely to make a dent in the larger problems that have been created, the report added. Stronger measures are needed to channel remittances into productive investments, to influence technology choices in favour of labour intensive, instead of capital intensive, activities and to expand the possibilities for acquiring needed skills at low cost, the report said.

Manpower export

Unfortunately, there is little evidence of this happening in any of the major labour exporting countries in Asia.

Manpower has become one of Asia's fastest growing exports. Almost two million of citizens from Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand and the Philippines were working in the Middle East alone in 1981. Their remittances to their families constitute a welcome windfall for the countries.

During the four years, 1978 to 1981, Pakistan benefited to the tune of \$6,943 million and it helped to cover 75 per cent of Pakistan's trade deficit in 1982, according to the ILO report.

India

During the same period, Indian migrants' remittances totalled \$8,414 million, South Korea \$4,040

million, Philippines \$1,875 million.

How was this money used? Judicious husbanding of the remittances and their investment in productive enterprises could probably have eased the problems the Governments now face in coping with returning migrants. But a number of recent studies on how remittance-receiving households spend their incomes show that most of the money has been and is being spent on consumer items.

Pakistan

In Pakistan, 62 per cent of migrant household expenditure was for consumption, 22 per cent for real estate and only 13 per cent for investment, the report said.

In Bangladesh, nearly half of the remittances was spent on the purchase of land, construction, repair and improvements of houses. In Thailand, substantial amounts were spent on house construction and renovation by families of emigrants.

The ILO report says that the boom in the outward flow of migrants from the major labour exporting countries of Asia may be thinning out and the reverse flow has started. It has not yet developed into an exodus, but indications are that in the later half of this decade, many Asian nations will face the problem of absorbing thousands of their returning migrants from the Middle East, the report concluded.

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PAKISTAN

BRIEFS

PRESS NOTE ON MEETING--Islamabad, Jan 19--A Press note issued by the Federal Government here today said that on a special request, some political persons were allowed to meet in Abbottabad on January 18 and 19, 1985. This was only a one-time permission, and no further meeting of this nature is being allowed. It is unfortunate that the attitude of some participants continues to be rigid, totally unreasonable and inflexible, the Press note added.--APP [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 1]

LEADER MOVED TO BAHAWALPUR JAIL--Multan, Jan 19--A leader of defunct PPP and former Punjab Law Minister Malik Mukhtar Ahmad Awan, has been shifted to Bahawalpur jail from Faisalabad, it is learnt. He was recently arrested from his house in Multan city and was first detained in Central Jail here. According to Begum Awan she, along with her children and some relatives, including the sister of Mr Awan, went to Faisalabad for 'mulaqat' in jail but was told he had been shifted to the Bahawalpur Jail. Local PPP leaders have protested against Malik Awan's repeated shifting within a week's time. They have also demanded shifting of Malik Jehangir Badar Additional General Secretary of defunct PPP, Punjab from Multan Jail to Lahore Jail. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 3]

JUP LEADERS DISCUSS DEVELOPMENTS--Karachi, Jan 19--About two dozen leaders of the defunct Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Pakistan (Sind) discussed on Saturday the latest political developments and expressed the hope that "meaningful elections ensuring a sovereign Parliament under 1973 Constitution" would be held. The meeting was presided over by Prof Shah Faridul Haq, Party's Senior Vice-President. The meeting lasted about 2 1/2 hours. He apprised the meeting of his talks with President Zia-ul-Haq and with a number of political leaders. He, later, told "Dawn" he was trying to contact Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani in Amsterdam (Holland) to keep him posted with the fast-changing situation and to know about the Maulana's plans to return home. When pointed out that the deadline fixed for filing of the nomination papers for NA would expire tomorrow (Sunday), Prof Faridul Haq said: "Our position as of today is the same as stated clearly in the Shoora's October/November resolutions. We will not participate in the purposeless poll." Meanwhile, Sind Minister Bostan Ali Hoti visited Prof Faridul Haq at his residence and remained with him for more than an hour. Earlier, Prof Faridul Haq called on Mr Musheer Ahmad Peshimam at his office and exchanged views with him. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 4]

GOVERNMENT CRITICIZED ON PRISONERS--Karachi, Jan 19--Information Secretary of the defunct Qaumi Mahaz-i-Azadi (QMA), Syed Alamdar Haider, has criticised the Government for not releasing Mr Mairaj Mohammad Khan, Mr Rasool Bakhsh Palejo and Mr Fazil Rahu, the three members of the Central Action Committee of the MRD. Addressing a Press conference in Karachi on Saturday, he said without their participation it would be very difficult for the MRD to reach a consensus on important political issues at its current session in Abbottabad. He also demanded release of all the detained political leaders and workers for creating a congenial atmosphere for the elections. A number of QMA leaders and workers were also present at the Press conference. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 4]

PESHIMAM'S CONVERSATION WITH NOORANI--Karachi, Jan 19--Mr Musheer Ahmad Peshimam had telephonic conversation with Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani in Amsterdam (Holland) on Saturday. The Maulana, while inquiring about the situation in the country, said "he wondered how could fair and free elections be held under such circumstances." [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 20 Jan 85 p 10]

NOORANI'S DIRECTIVE ON ELECTIONS--Karachi, Jan 20--The defunct JUP's decision not to participate in the poll unless it is conducted on a party basis and under the 1973 Constitution, holds good and no deviation from it by party office-bearers or workers would be countenanced. This was the directive given by the party chief, Maulana Shah Ahmad Noorani, in a telephonic conversation from Amsterdam late Saturday night, Prof Shah Faridul Haq, party's Senior Vice-President, said here on Sunday. Accordingly, Prof Farid said, he had already forwarded the Maulana's directive to the party's various branches in Karachi and Sind. Similar action had been taken by the Secretary-General, Maulana Abdus Sattar Khan Niazi, in the Punjab and other provinces. The Acting President, Pir Syed Barkat Ahmad Shah, had also been informed, Prof Farid told "Dawn." He made it clear that, henceforth, no JUP office-bearer or worker could file his/her nomination papers for any National or Provincial Assembly seats nor could support any other candidate. [Text] [Karachi DAWN in English 21 Jan 84 p 8]

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END